



Indiana  
Department of Education

# Social Emotional Learning Toolkit

Built Upon A  
Neurodevelopmental Culturally  
Responsive Framework



*Infographic created by Dr. Brandie Oliver, 2018*

# OVERVIEW

Together, school districts and educators, can help students develop social-emotional learning competencies by intentionally teaching these skills, by implementing educational neuroscience learning strategies, by practicing culturally responsive classroom-management, and by approaching this work with a growth mindset.

## Goals of the Toolkit

- To increase educators' awareness, knowledge, and skills regarding social-emotional learning
- To promote collaboration between educators, community, and families to address the social-emotional learning competency development of all students
- To enhance knowledge of educational practices that promote social-emotional learning competency development
- To provide tools and resources to educators to help improve students' social-emotional skills

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# BACKGROUND

Significant progress has been made in the United States to establish Social-Emotional Learning as a component of education policy. On December 10, 2015, President Obama signed the bipartisan Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), which reauthorizes the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA). ESSA contains several elements that support social and emotional learning and provides flexibility for states and local school districts to define and assess student success.



One example is in Title IV, LEAs who receives allocations under section 4105 are required to implement comprehensive programs that “foster safe, healthy, supportive, and drug free environments that support student academic achievement” including programs that “support a healthy, active lifestyle”, “help prevent bullying and harassment”, and “establish learning environments and enhance students’ effective learning skills that are essential for school readiness and academic success such as by providing integrated systems of student and family supports” ([Every Student Succeeds Act, Sec. 4108, 2015](#)). For more information on Indiana’s ESSA’s plan, please click [here](#).

## Audience For The Toolkit

The toolkit is designed to be a starting point for school staff to begin integrating SEL into their teaching practices. Administrators and any educator in the school community can use this toolkit to find initial strategies and resources to improve student social, emotional, behavioral, and academic skills. The information, knowledge, and tools can be used by individual educators to develop personal skill sets, by professional learning communities focusing on SEL, by school counselors to assist in guidance curriculum and/or small group counseling, school social workers to support the work with students and families, and by school administrators as a resource to promote the social-emotional skill development of the educators, students, and families in your school community. Although the toolkit provides some fundamental SEL tools and information, those who want to dig deeper into SEL should begin working on a district-wide integration plan to ensure a coordinated, consistent, and vertically aligned program.

## Toolkit Organization

The toolkit has two primary sections.

 <b>SECTION 1</b> <b>EXPLORING SEL</b>	 <b>SECTION 2</b> <b>PK-12 SEL RESOURCES</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. What is Social-Emotional Learning?</li><li>2. Brief SEL Research: Why SEL?</li><li>3. Implementation: What is Needed? Next Steps</li><li>4. Educational Best Practices for SEL Implementation</li></ol>	<p>This section is solely dedicated to providing sample activities and resources that demonstrate multiple ways educators can infuse the Indiana Social-Emotional Learning Competencies into daily practice.</p>

# SECTION #1: EXPLORING SEL

## What Is Social-Emotional Learning?

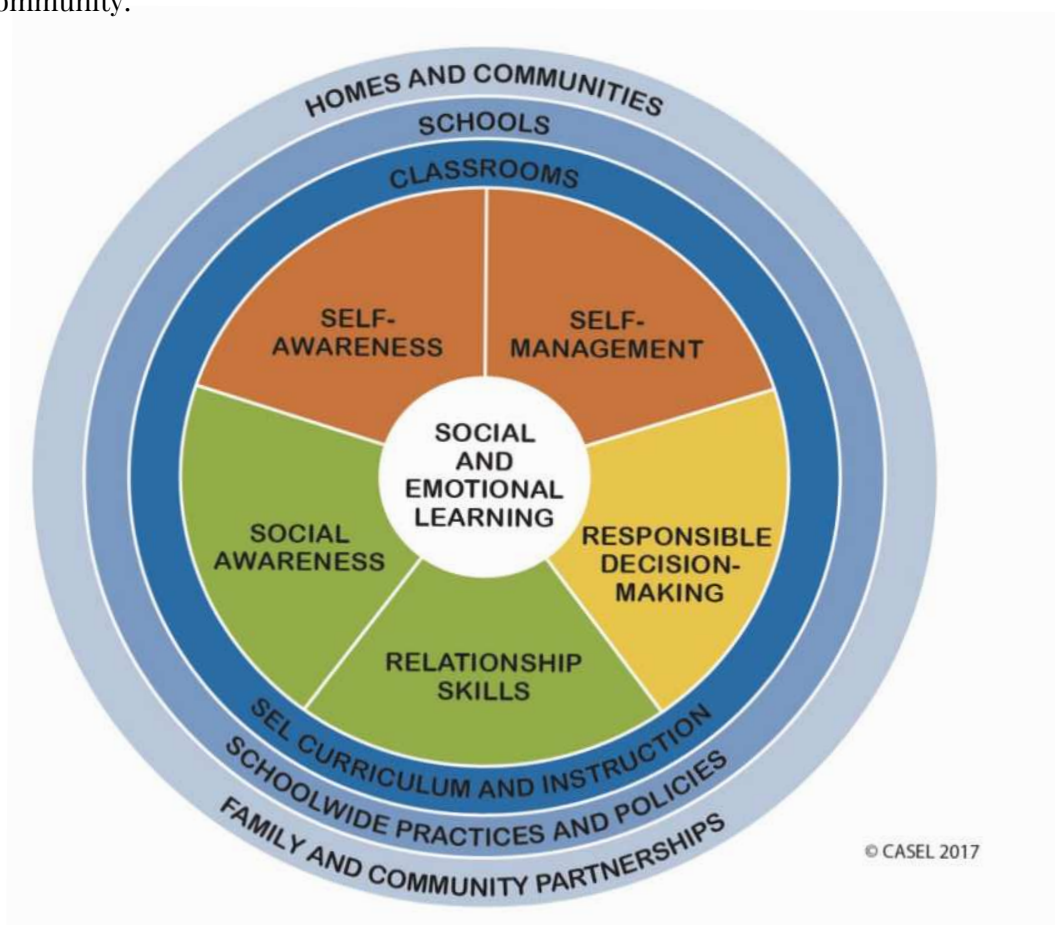
### WHAT IS SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING?

Social-emotional learning refers to a wide array of knowledge, attitudes, and skills that are essential both to students' academic and overall postsecondary success. Critical analysis, emotional awareness, problem-solving, conflict-resolution, teamwork, and decision-making are all examples of the kind of SEL skills necessary for success yet these are not typically measured by the traditional assessments in our schools. The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (herein referred to as CASEL) has been a leader, a catalyst, advocate, and a collaborator serving the field of Social and Emotional Learning (herein referred to as SEL). CASEL describes SEL as the process through which students gain and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and express empathy for others, develop and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions [1].

The intentional goals of teaching, practicing, and the full implementation of SEL programs are to nurture the development of the five core interrelated sets of cognitive, affective, and behavioral competencies: self-awareness, management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision making [1]. According to Elias[2], SEL increases students' ability to integrate thinking, feeling, and behavior to achieve academic success and life tasks.

## *Systemic Implementation of Social-Emotional Learning*

CASEL demonstrates that systemic SEL is promoted across multiple contexts each day. Social-emotional learning needs to be more than just a single program or a series of lessons. It is about how teaching and learning happens, as well as what you teach and where you learn. CASEL's framework identifies five core SEL competencies as shown in the below graphic [1]. The key component to systemic implementation is to make SEL a priority and to fully implement across multiple settings – districts, schools, classrooms, families, and the wider community.



## *School Climate & Social-Emotional Learning*

School climate is associated with the quality and character of school life. Patterns of students', parents' and educators' school experiences measures school climate. School climate also reflects the norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices, and organizational structures [19]. Indications of a positive school climate include perceptions of emotional and physical safety, support, inclusiveness, respect, challenge, and engagement. Social-emotional learning and school climate are complementary and interconnected [20]. SEL and school climate are within all settings and impact student-educator interactions, and influence students and teachers directly and indirectly. By embedding social-emotional learning programming, it provides opportunities for students and staff to develop social-emotional competence, therefore enhancing a positive school environment.

# RESEARCH

The research base for SEL is strong, with a long history of rigorous studies, longitudinal follow-ups and multiple replications. The findings all point to desired attitude, behavioral, and academic outcomes. Ultimately, SEL has a positive impact on student achievement as well as employability and overall mental wellbeing.

According to a 2011 meta-analysis of 213 studies involving more than 270,000 students, those students who participated in evidence-based SEL programs showed an 11 percentile-point gain in academic achievement, compared to students who did not participate in SEL programs [3]. Students who participated in SEL programs also demonstrated the following attributes: increased academic achievement; increased development of social and emotional skills; improved attitude toward self and others; improved positive social behaviors and decreased conduct problems and emotional distress. The chart below displays the results of this meta-analysis study by identifying the positive effects of SEL programming on student attitudes, student behaviors, and school performance.

ATTITUDES	BEHAVIORS	SCHOOL PERFORMANCE
Better sense of community	More class participation	Improved math, literacy, and social study skills
Higher academic motivation	Stronger pro-social skills	Higher achievement test scores (+14%)
Better understanding of consequences	Improved attendance	Higher grades(+11%)
Better coping skills	Reduction in discipline referrals	Improved metacognition skills
Increased attitude toward school & learning	On track to graduate	Improved problem-solving skills
		Improved planning skills
		Use of higher level reasoning skills
		Improvements in reading comprehension

Table [3]



Kindergarten students with stronger social-emotional skills were more likely to graduate from high school and college and have stable, full-time employment while being less likely to commit crimes, be on public assistance, and have drug, alcohol, and mental health problems[4].

## **Financial Benefits of SEL Programs**

A study by Belfield, Bowden, Klapp, Levin, Shand, Zander of the projected economic return from six evidence-based SEL programs found that all of them showed a return on investment [5]. The aggregate result shows considerable benefits relative to costs, with an average benefit-cost ratio of about 11 to 1 among the six interventions. Meaning, on average, there was an \$11 return on investment for every one dollar spent, a substantial economic return.

## **Connection To College & Career Readiness**

A Forbes report on “the 10 skills employers most want in 2015 graduates” ranked the following four skills at the top:

- ✔ the ability to work in a team,
- ✔ the ability to solve problems,
- ✔ the ability to make decisions, and
- ✔ the ability to communicate verbally with people inside and outside an organization [6].

In the 2016 World Economic Forum [7] report, 16 most critical 21st century skills were identified. Of these 16 skills, 12 were social and emotional skills further demonstrating the need for students to learn social-emotional skills if they are to thrive in the workplace of the future.

## **Positive Impact on Teachers**

Teachers’ social-emotional competence and wellbeing reflect in their classroom behavior management and interactions with students, which significantly impacts relationships. Teachers with higher social-emotional competence organize their classrooms and provide emotional and instructional support in ways that are associated with a high-quality classroom climate [8]. It is important to recognize the teacher’s own SEL competence and emotional wellbeing help ensure effective implementation of SEL programming.

According to the 2014 Gallop Poll survey, 46% of teachers report high daily stress during the school year [9]. This stress score is tied with nurses for the highest rate among all occupational groups. This high rate causes worry for multiple reasons. First, it is important that people are fulfilled and feeling satisfied in their careers. With almost ½ of teachers reporting daily stress, it appears satisfaction and fulfillment are not being met by many. Secondly, when teachers are feeling overwhelmed and stressed, then these feelings will be transferred into the learning environment—therefore impacting students. Finally, when working to adopt a comprehensive

SEL program, it is imperative that teachers are modeling these skills. Teachers that are stressed, overwhelmed, and disengaged will be incapable of modeling SEL competencies on a consistent basis.

When examining research studies that implemented SEL programs focusing to improve student behavior and promoting SEL among students, the results not only addressed these issues but also showed a reduction in teacher stress [10]. Results of other studies supported these results with other complementary findings:

- ✔ Lower job-related anxiety and depression [11].
- ✔ Increased classroom student-teacher interactions [12].
- ✔ Enhanced teacher engagement [13].
- ✔ Increased perceived job control [14].

In the past few years, interventions have sought to improve teachers' social-emotional competence to address stress management in schools. Researchers found positive results with programs that focused specifically on mindfulness.

The researchers found that compared to a control group, teachers who received CARE (Cultivating Awareness and Resilience in Education) training showed greater improvements in adaptive emotion regulation and mindfulness, and reducing psychological distress and time urgency (a feeling of time pressure and needing to hurry through daily tasks) [15]. In the classrooms with teachers who received CARE training, their levels of emotional support were sustained throughout the school year, however, in control-group classrooms, the emotional support fell as the year went on. Mindfulness programming continues to receive positive data outcomes both for student and teacher results.

## Summary

Not only has research demonstrated a positive impact on the behavioral and academic impact on students, but SEL programming has a positive impact on the overall wellbeing on teachers as well. Investing in a systemic and comprehensive implementation of SEL programming is a win-win (both in the present and for years to come) for all recipients within the school community.



“At a time when the traditional structures of caring have deteriorated, schools must become places where teachers and students live together, talk with each other, and take delight in each other’s company. My guess is that when schools focus on what really matters in life, the cognitive ends we now pursue so painfully and artificially will be achieved somewhat more naturally...It is obvious that children will work harder and do things—even odd things like adding fractions—for people they love and trust.”  
~Nel Noddings

## IMPLEMENTATION

First it is important to recognize the implementation of SEL programming will be a process that will take time, patience, and persistence. No matter how much data or positive narratives shared, implementing a new program can be met with some resistance by people that do not fully recognize the importance of integrating social emotional competencies for effective learning. Despite this challenge, it is imperative to stay the course. Remember, social-emotional learning competencies are foundational skills, helping to ensure students have the social, emotional, behavioral, and academic skills necessary for lifelong success. When working to build an SEL program, it is best to identify other educators in your school that have a passion for SEL programming. The Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) team may be the best group, as this team is an established group of educators that use data to meet the needs of all students. The following steps provide guidance in developing a comprehensive, data-driven SEL program.

- **Administrative Support**
- **SEL Advisory Team**
- **School-Wide Program**
- **Professional Development**
- **Collaboration**
- **Policy & Procedure**

## Administrative Support

With administrative support, SEL becomes a priority. The principal can lead by helping create a school-wide vision of students' social, emotional, behavioral, and academic development for a safe and supportive learning environment. Within this vision, it clearly articulates how SEL programming plays a pivotal role in addressing the needs of the students and 'how' the school will support educators, students, and families in achieving this success. Additionally, the administrator can help secure funding to support the work that will be necessary for the SEL program to be successful.

- ▶ Flagged: As it relates to full implementation, it is important to discuss the administrator's role in evaluation. As teachers and counselors begin to integrate SEL lessons and strategies into their daily classrooms, it is critical they know they are fully supported. All educators need to be assured they will NOT be scored lower on an evaluation if the administrator observes their classroom and they are engaged in an SEL lesson and/or strategy at that moment, instead of the 'regularly scheduled content lesson. It is advantageous to pause a lesson and respond to the needs of the students. It also demonstrates to students that you care and sends them a strong message that your classroom is a safe and supportive environment.

## SEL Advisory Team

With administrative support, it is important to get a core group of educators together to examine the baseline data, explore the needs of your school community, the readiness for SEL programming, professional development needs, and the current SEL activity taking place in the school. The Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) team is a great entry point to this discussion. The MTSS team may become the SEL Advisory team or suggest members that will become the SEL Advisory team. Regardless, it is recommended to begin the SEL comprehensive program discussion and SEL Advisory Team development within the current structure of the MTSS model that exists in the school.

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*A central aspect of the MTSS model is using data to determine fidelity of implementation of instructional strategies and to measure the effectiveness of strategies that were implemented. Continuous assessment and monitoring of students determine their progress toward mastery of core content, social/emotional learning, and behavioral skills and strategies are employed to help them achieve academic success.*

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## Possible Questions

- ❓ What are the needs of the students in the school community?
- ❓ What data are used to demonstrate these needs? Are these the best data sources?
- ❓ What program(s) does the school currently use to teach social-emotional learning competencies?
- ❓ What level of knowledge does the current staff have regarding SEL competencies?

## Assessing Social-Emotional Readiness

The following resources and tools can be used to assist districts and school administrators as they work to implement comprehensive social-emotional learning programs.

### ★ CASEL's District Resource Center

- CASEL has an online suite of tools accessed by users worldwide that provides guidance and support for districts and schools to implement high-quality, evidence-based SEL in their communities. Link to CASEL's resource [here](#).

### ★ District and School Leader Readiness Tool

- The Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Midwest Educator Effectiveness Research Alliance, REL Midwest developed this tool to help district and school administrators gauge the extent to which district and school leaders have the necessary training, support, and school culture to facilitate the identification and ongoing professional development of teacher leaders. The results of this assessment can be used to generate a list of areas for improvement, resources needed, and next steps to increase readiness to cultivate effective teacher leadership. Click [here to access the District and School Leader Readiness Tool](#).

### ★ Teacher Self-Assessment Tool

- The Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Midwest Educator Effectiveness Research Alliance, REL Midwest and the Center on Great Teachers and Leaders developed this tool for teachers to self-assess their knowledge, skills, and competencies to serve in teacher leadership roles. Teachers, working either on their own or with their peers, coaches, or evaluators, can use this tool to assess their level of readiness for being a teacher leader and develop a plan to prepare themselves for leadership. Click [here to access the Teacher Self-Assessment Tool](#).

### ★ Self-Assessing Social and Emotional Instruction and Competencies: A Tool for Teachers

- The Center on Great Teachers and Leaders developed this tool as a self-assessment designed to help educators reflect upon (1) their current teaching practices that impact student SEL, and (2) their own SEL competencies to implement those teaching practices. Click [here to access the Teacher Self-Assessment Tool. Self-Assessing Social and Emotional Instruction and Competencies: A Tool for Teachers](#).

## **School-Wide Program**

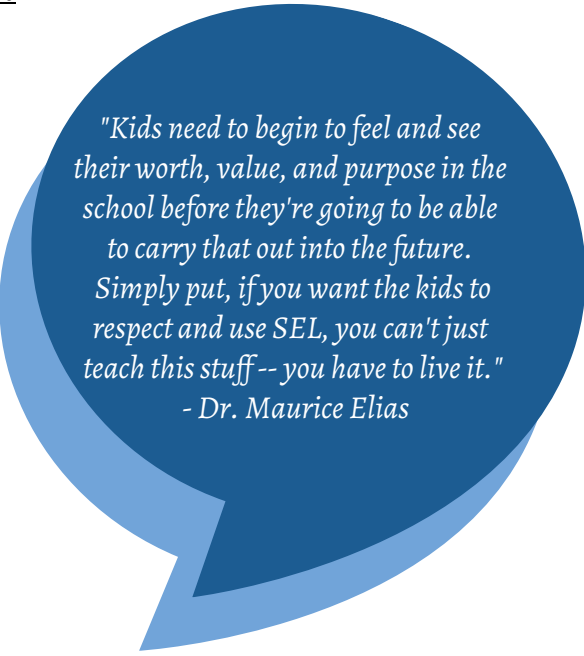
Using the data collected from the Advisory Team planning meetings, the next step is to create a comprehensive school-wide SEL program. In doing so, developing common SEL terminology is an important strategy so all educators, students, families, and community members have a shared understanding when discussing these skills and competencies. What level of knowledge does the current staff have regarding SEL competencies?

The school-wide program clearly outlines the SEL school goals and how these goals connect to the School Improvement Plan. Additionally, the plan needs to include evaluation measures so there is a clear and transparent way to demonstrate the effectiveness of the SEL program implementation.

Social-emotional learning programs are implemented as part of a school-wide effort that requires the cooperation and support of all school staff and, ideally, families and the community as well. School staff provide direct instruction, practice and experience in SEL skills that is embedded within the curriculum. Families reinforce the SEL skills outside of the school to provide additional opportunities to practice the skills as well as demonstrating to students the importance of SEL. The community provides support services in various capacities (e.g., before/after school care reinforcing SEL skills, tier 2 & 3 supports to students needing services, etc.) which indicates SEL is vital to student success.

## **Instructional Strategies Supporting SEL Implementation**

When working on SEL school-wide implementation, it is important to focus on the instructional strategies of all educators. The Center on Great Teachers and Leaders identified 10 teaching practices that were most common across six selected research-based SEL programs and eight SEL scholars. The 10 practices are not exhaustive, but they represent instructional strategies that can be used in classrooms to support positive learning environments, social-emotional competencies, and academic learning [21]. A brief description of the 10 instructional strategies are included. To find more information, click here for the full report, [Teaching the Whole Child Instructional Practices That Support Social-Emotional Learning in Three Teacher Evaluation Frameworks.](#)



*"Kids need to begin to feel and see their worth, value, and purpose in the school before they're going to be able to carry that out into the future. Simply put, if you want the kids to respect and use SEL, you can't just teach this stuff-- you have to live it."*  
- Dr. Maurice Elias

## 1. Student-Centered Discipline

- Student-centered discipline refers to the types of classroom-management strategies teachers use in their classrooms. Effective student-centered discipline utilizes disciplinary strategies that are developmentally appropriate, culturally responsive, trauma responsive, prioritize relationship-building, and strive to find intrinsic motivation with students.

## 2. Teacher Language

- Teacher language refers to how the teachers talk to students. Focusing language on effort, support, and acknowledging small gains is important and necessary for all students. It is also essential in relationship-building, gaining trust, and building a safe learning community. Educators need to work on developing growth mindset language skills (process praise--more information and resources can be found in the next section).

## 3. Responsibility and Choice

- Responsibility and choice refers to the degree to which teachers allow students to make responsible decisions about their work in their classroom. Student voice is a critical element in a SEL program and within a positive school climate. Students need to feel empowered and their thoughts, opinions, and ideas matter. [Link here to find Student Voice Reflection Activities](#)

## 4. Warmth & Support

- Warmth and support refers to the academic and social support that students receive from their teacher and from their peers. Students need to feel they matter and people care about them. Teachers can implement intentional activities to show students genuine interest and build rapport (e.g., morning meetings, circles, one-on-one meetings, greet students entering class, etc.).

## 5. Cooperative Learning

- Cooperative learning refers to a specific instructional task in which teachers have students work together toward a collective goal. There are five key elements to implement cooperative learning effectively (1) positive interdependence, (2) individual accountability, (3) promoting one another's successes, (4) applying interpersonal and social skills, and (5) group processing (the group discusses the findings and any progress toward goal). [Link here to find Cooperative Learning Techniques](#)

## 6. Classroom Discussions

- Classroom discussions refers to conversations students and teachers have around content. It is important to remember that not all students have strong communication skills. Teaching students how to engage in critical conversations with both peers and adults is an essential life skill, especially when they do not agree.

## 7. Self-Reflection & Self-Assessment

- Self-reflection and self-assessment are instructional tasks where students are asked to actively think about their own work. For students to be able to reflect, they must first assess their work. It becomes a continuous improvement cycle that needs to be taught. Goal-setting needs to be included in this cycle as well as giving and receiving feedback.

## 8. Balanced Instruction

- Balanced instruction refers to teachers using an appropriate balance between active instruction and direct instruction, as well as the appropriate balance between individual and collaborative learning. Using multiple strategies helps provide an engaging learning environment and gives several opportunities for students to practice SEL skills.

## 9. Academic Press and Expectations

- Academic press refers to a teacher's implementation of meaningful and challenging work, and academic expectations focus on the teacher's belief that all students can and will succeed. Setting high expectations shows a belief that all students are capable of learning and succeeding--it is important that academic supports are also included with the academic rigor.

## 10. Competence Building—Modeling, Practicing, Feedback, Coaching

- Competence building occurs when teachers help develop social-emotional learning competencies systematically through the typical instructional cycle: goals/objectives of the lesson, introduction to new material and modeling, group and individual practice, and personal self-reflection.

## **Essential Social-Emotional Skills For Students**

Just as teaching strategies are important for educators, knowing the skills to teach to students are just as important. CASEL identified 15 social-emotional skills essential in students' overall social and emotional growth and development. These skills have been demonstrated in sound character and social-emotional development, as well as to help students see themselves and their learning as positive resources for their families, schools, workplaces, and communities [1]. The infographic below displays these 15 social-emotional skills.

Link to [Essential Skills for Social-Emotional Learning Infographic](#).

# **Essential Skills for Social-Emotional Learning**

The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL), has extensive knowledge in social-emotional learning best practices from years of research and investigation. Through an expansive empirical literature review, CASEL identified the below 15 teachable social-emotional skills essential for educating students to ensure sound character and social-emotional development, as well as to help students view themselves as positive resources for their families, schools, workplaces, and communities.

More at CASEL's website [here](#).

- **Knowing One's Emotions**
- **Ability To Take Other's Perspectives**
- **Listening & Communicating Effectively**
- **Conflict-Management Skills & Negotiation Skills**
- **Recognizing Strength In Self & Others**
- **Showing Ethical, Moral & Social Responsibility**
- **Respecting Others**
- **Setting Adaptive and/or Learning Goals**
- **Cooperating With Others**
- **Seeking & Giving Help & Support**
- **Perceiving Others' Feelings Accurately**
- **Leading & Being A Good Team Member**
- **Problem-Solving Skills & Decision-Making Skills**
- **Communicating & Interacting Effectively with Diverse Others**
- **Developing Constructive, Healthy, Ethical, Mutual Relationships**

Modified from: Elias, M.J. (2009). Social-Emotional and Character Development and Academics as a Dual Focus of Educational Policy, Educational Policy 23(6), 831-846.  
Infographic created by: Dr. Brandie Oliver, Butler University (2018)



## **Professional Development**

Professional development is necessary and needs to be ongoing. Research shows teachers implement SEL programs more successfully when they have a positive attitude toward the program, are motivated to deliver it with fidelity, and are confident that they possess the skills and knowledge to do so well [10]. An additional finding from the Durlak study [3] found students demonstrated improved academic performance only when teachers, as opposed to researchers or community members, implemented SEL programs, further supporting the need for comprehensive training for all teachers. Ensuring all teachers are equipped with adequate and ongoing SEL professional development is essential to the SEL program implementation, sustainability, and overall effectiveness.

The kinds of professional development activities that are beneficial include training staff in children's social-emotional development, modeling and practice of constructivist and project-based teaching methods, multimodal instruction, coaching, and mutual feedback from colleagues.

A one-time training will not be effective in developing the level of confidence necessary or the level of knowledge or skills needed for long-term success. Educators need ongoing coaching and continuous support when learning and teaching SEL skills to students [11]. When facilitating professional development activities, it is important to educate on typical child and adolescent social-emotional development and conduct trainings using a constructivist approach to learning while also modeling the SEL skills you are teaching (and desire your participants to learn and practice).

After initial rollout of the professional development phase, use the data collected during your planning phase and continuous improvement data to offer topical trainings and/or tiered-level trainings so you can customize and differentiate to the needs of specific educators in your school(s).

### **Additional Professional Development Tips** [20]

- Develop a wide range of professional development activities for all levels and content areas of educators, including support staff and parents.
- Teach the educators about their own social-emotional competence and biases and how their personal biases can influence their teaching and interactions with students.
- Provide targeted training on the impacts of trauma and the importance of trauma-responsive approaches to teaching.
- Demonstrate how Student Service professionals (e.g., school counselors, school social worker, school psychologist, school nurse) play a critical role in SEL and school climate initiatives, especially for students who need more intensive supports and/or to support you as you roll out SEL programming.

## **Collaboration**

The work of SEL is not done in a vacuum. The SEL Advisory Team will be working to strengthen and expand partnerships with mental health agencies, after-school agencies, club sponsors, coaches and families. Identify the school's current partners and seek to expand these partnerships. What gaps do you have in serving your students? Do you have providers that meet the linguistic needs of your school population? Religious populations? Invite your partners to SEL trainings to ensure everyone is equipped with the knowledge and skill set to be good mentors and models of the SEL skills that are being taught and expected in the school. With increased stakeholders involved in supporting student SEL development, the greater the impact will be.

### **Key Strategies**

#### **✓ Collaboration and Referral Information to Mental Health Organizations**

- School policies need to describe the "how, when, and where" to refer families for mental health services. All educators need to be trained on the policy and need to have training on how to support students both at school and when they return to school after receiving mental health services.

#### **✓ Family Partnerships**

- All educators need to take a strength-based approach to communication with families. Work to be inclusive and strive to find opportunities that encourages family participation throughout the school year. It is critical to convey that families/parents are vital to student success.

#### **✓ Community Partners**

- Within a school district are several community organizations, work to build partnerships with youth-serving community partners that support the mission and vision of your school.

## *Policy & Procedure*

The school's policy and procedures need to align with the fundamental premise of SEL. If there is a discrepancy, it needs to be addressed and taken to the School Board to be addressed. A common example is that of school discipline. A zero tolerance policy would not be in alignment with a school that is implementing a comprehensive SEL program. Instead, a positive school discipline approach that embraces a Restorative Practices policy would align with an SEL model school.

An example "new" policy/procedure that a school may want to adopt would be adding SEL to the school report card. Making a shift to a holistic approach to teaching and learning needs to include both the formative and summative assessment measures. Here is a resource to assist in the development of these tools: [The Other Side of the Report Card: Assessing Students' Social, Emotional, and Character Development. Corwin.](#)

## *Evidence-Based SEL Programming*

Lastly, working to adopt an evidence-based SEL program that meets the needs of your students is an important goal. It is imperative to examine the criteria of the evidence-based program before adopting and purchasing. A few questions to consider include:

- How much does this program cost?
- Do I need to obtain formal training with the developer of the program?
- Is there a renewal to the training process? If yes, how many years?
- What is the cost per student?
- What is the effectiveness of the program? Based on several factors of SEL implementation:
  - What does this program need me to do to get the same results?
  - How does the school implement the program with fidelity?
  - What is adequate training for staff to achieve optimal results?
  - Are parents involved in the program?

Fidelity of program implementation is critical. Often, evidence-based programs are purchased and implemented, yet parts of the program are not fully executed.

**Below are a list of websites that offer evidence-based programs for your review.**



CASEL has an online suite of tools accessed by users worldwide that provides guidance and support for districts and schools to implement high-quality, evidence-based SEL in their communities. [Link to CASEL Program Guides](#)

SAMHSA is committed to advancing the adoption of evidence-based interventions related to mental health and substance use. In April 2018, SAMHSA launched the Evidence-Based Practices Resource Center (Resource Center) that aims to provide communities, clinicians, policy makers, and others in the field with the information and tools they need to incorporate evidence-based practices into their communities or clinical settings. [Link to Evidence-Based Practices Resource Center](#)

The [What Works Clearinghouse](#) (WWC) reviews the existing research on different programs, products, practices, and policies in education. Our goal is to provide educators with the information they need to make evidence-based decisions. We focus on the results from high-quality research to answer the question “What works in education?”

[Blueprints For Healthy Youth Development](#) helps you easily identify evidence-based programs that help young people reach their full potential. Get ahead of serious challenges that influence children's success with programs that have the highest standards for promoting pro-social behavior, academic success, emotional well-being, physical health and positive relationships.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS): A database with hundreds of evidence-based interventions and resources to improve the health of communities, informed by science-based, 10-year national objectives to measurably improve Americans' health. Searchable by multiple criteria, including strength of evidence, population group, intervention type, and resource type. Find resource here: [Healthy People 2020](#).

The [Promising Practices Network](#) site features summaries of programs and practices that are proven to improve outcomes for children. All programs have been reviewed for quality and to ensure that they have evidence of positive effects.

# BEST PRACTICES

CASEL recommends using the the S.A.F.E. (Sequenced, Active, Focused, Explicit) model when implementing SEL instruction [3,16]. The S.A.F.E. model is also highly effective in promoting SEL expertise in adults [17], so it is important to remember this acronym not only in student programming but also in professional development programming. Blyth, Olson, and Walker added an "R" (Reflection) to the original model [18], now making the S.A.F.E.R. model (Sequenced, Active, Focused, Explicit, Reflection), which is fully defined and described in detail below.

## Sequenced

- ✓ SEL program has a clear series of steps; connected and coordinated skill development
- ? Does the program apply a planned set of activities to develop skills sequentially in a step-by-step fashion?

### Important to Provide Details & Steps

- For many students, these skills may be new. Do not make any assumptions that students know what you are teaching. Don't skip steps. Don't skip details. Go slow—take your time and go step by step in the skill you are teaching. Think about the best scope and sequence for students. Not all students will be starting at the same place, so breaking skills into small steps will be important and providing clear goals and opportunities for mastery at all levels is essential.

## Active

- ✓ Activities need to be experiential, hands-on, engaging, and provide students multiple opportunities to practice the SEL skills
- ? Does the program use active forms of learning such as role-plays and behavioral rehearsal with feedback?

### Important to Model SEL Skills

- It is critical to demonstrate and model to the students what you expect and what others expect these skills to look and sound like. For example, tone of voice is just as an important component of an apology as saying "I am sorry," so hearing and seeing their teachers give a genuine apology can be a powerful experience for a student.

## Active (cont).

### Process Questions

- ❓ What did you SEE me doing?
- ❓ What did you HEAR me saying?
- ❓ What did it feel like to be my friend in this situation?
- ❓ What emotions can you identify?
- ❓ For others in the class that were observers, what did you see, hear, feel?

\*Remember, as an educator, you are constantly being watched by your students. Therefore, you are always modeling these skills. Be a good role model inside and outside of the classroom!

## Focused

- ✔ SEL program needs to have a clear plan with dedicated time, resources, and with educators that are intentional about their SEL teaching and learning (committed)
- ❓ Does the program devote sufficient time and resources exclusively to develop social and emotional skills? Is there a plan with clearly stated SEL outcomes?

### Time, Resources, & Intentionality

- Taking advantage of "teachable moments" is always encouraged, it cannot be the only time SEL is taught in schools. All educators need to be committed and dedicate time during the school day to embed SEL instruction into the curriculum to ensure ALL students develop these skills.
- Practice makes permanent (remember growth mindset and neuroplasticity?) It will take multiple times to practice these skills before habits are made, so work to infuse SEL skills into your classroom learning activities. The more practice your students have---the better they will become. Additionally, it is important to normalize the feedback process. Encourage peer to peer feedback, so you are not the only person students are relying on for feedback.
- **Continuous Skill Development:** As students practice and improve their SEL skills, new skills need to be continuously introduced and practiced. It is important to review prior skills as new skills are presented and also be intentional by demonstrating how the skills connect with each other.
- Resources need to be dedicated for SEL programming. These resources include but are not limited to financial support, staff support, program evaluation support, professional development, consultation, tier 3 services, etc.

# Explicit

- ✓ Targeting a specific SEL skill; having a clear and specific goal; knowing what specific SEL gaps or challenges to address-having a narrow/specific focus

- ? Does the program target specific social-emotional learning skills?

Which ones? Did the data reveal a specific deficit?

- ▶ It is important to review the data your school/school corporation are using to ensure the validity and reliability for measuring student SEL skills/knowledge.

## **Cultural Responsiveness Needs to Be An Explicit Part of the SEL Program**

- Ensure teaching practices, classroom management strategies, discipline policy/procedures, and the SEL program includes discussions focusing on cultural responsiveness and sensitivity, respect for diversity, and provides support(s) for any vulnerable and/or marginalized populations.

## **SEL Instruction: It's not a secret**

- Share with students what you are teaching and why it is important. If the lesson is on communication skills, then be explicit in "the what and the why" of the lesson. So often, students get frustrated because they do not connect one lesson to other lessons, to other content areas, or to their future. Explain how the SEL skills they are learning cross multiple domains of their lives (personal, school, and their future career) and give concrete examples. By doing so, students will begin to understand the "why" and take a greater investment in their learning.

# Reflection

- ✓ Taking time to think about how SEL connects to all parts of one's life; Students work to make personal meaning of the skills learned; Reflection is a valuable tool for educators and SEL teams to use in evaluation of SEL program evaluation (what is working and what needs to be improved?)

- ? How does SEL knowledge and skill connect to all parts of one's life? Both now in for the future? In what ways are we helping students process the SEL activities? How are we measuring what is most effective? How are students documenting personal growth?

## **Make Meaning & Transformative Practice**

- For SEL programming to have a lasting impact, students need to be invested in the program, process, and activities. Reflection provides time for youth to make connections between what they are learning and their feelings, relationships, and their future. Just as other components, time needs to be dedicated for reflective practice and processing.



# S.A.F.E.R. Model

*For a Social-Emotional Learning program to be effective, the S.A.F.E.R. model's five elements need to be incorporated into the SEL program activities.*

S Sequenced	A Active	F Focused	E Explicit	* R Reflection
<p>Clear learning series</p> <p>Steps are well connected, defined, and students have clear path toward achieving mastery of SEL knowledge &amp; skill development</p>	<p>SEL activities need to be experiential and students need to have multiple opportunities to practice these skills (e.g., role-plays, behavioral rehearsal, classroom activities, etc.).</p>	<p>SEL activities need to be experiential and students need to have multiple opportunities to practice these skills (e.g., role-plays, behavioral rehearsal, classroom activities, etc.).</p>	<p>Dedicated time, funding, resources, and planning are critical as well as the intentional practice for effective SEL outcomes -cannot be haphazard or sporadic</p>	<p>Taking time to reflect on how SEL is connecting to other parts of our lives</p> <p>Thinking about the growth areas and how SEL can support/help</p>

S.A.F.E. Model resource: Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor & Schellinger, 2011; Durlak, Weissberg & Pachan, 2010

\* Reflection is an addition from the work of Blyth, Olson & Walker (2017)

Infographic created by Dr. Brandie Oliver, 2018 ©

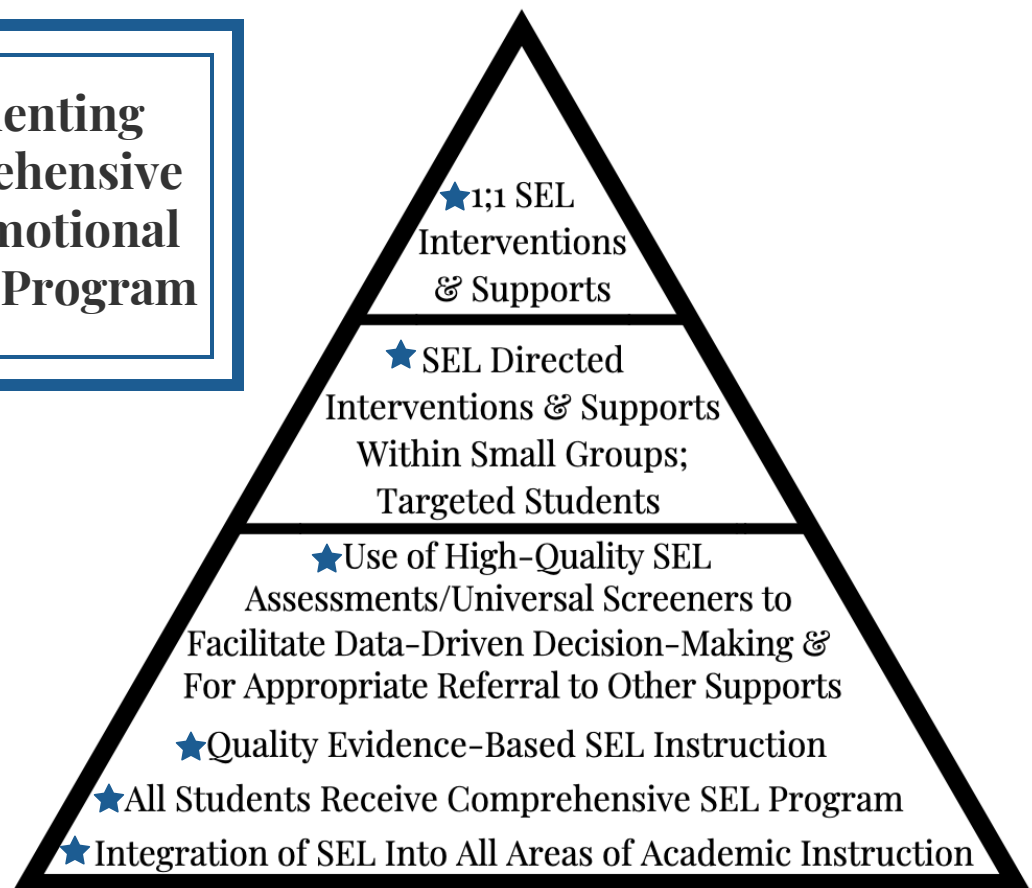
Infographic above provides a quick overview of the S.A.F.E.R. model.

## Universal Vertical Prevention Integration

The universal prevention approach is provided to all students within the school community, with multiple levels of interventions provided to students across the three levels within the Multi-Tiered Systems of Support to vertically align to match the needs of students using data to determine the best intervention, resource, and supports. The graphic on the following page provides a visual of this vertical universal integration model.

# Multi-Tiered System of Supports

## Implementing A Comprehensive Social-Emotional Learning Program



### Tier 1 Examples

- ➔ Establish positive and predictable classroom environments using:
  - ★ Shared expectations or classroom rules that teachers and students develop together to establish positive group and social norms for the classroom (e.g., listen respectfully when others are speaking, no put downs, etc.).
  - ★ Growth mindset practices that reinforce the value of effort, persistence, challenges, learning from mistakes, etc.
- ➔ Encourage positive teacher-student interactions and student-student interactions. Strategies include:
  - ★ Morning meetings, circles, advisory meetings, etc.
  - ★ Intentional practices of greeting students by name when they enter the class, telling students an exit message as they leave your class, and/or any other routine practices that students can come to expect on a daily basis (e.g., music to start class-students take turns selecting, etc.).

## **Tier 1 Examples (cont.)**

- Ask inclusive not exclusive questions when working with students. See the two examples below:
  - ★ Exclusive: Where did you go over Spring Break?
    - \*Not every student will go somewhere over Spring Break.
  - ★ Inclusive: What was your favorite part of Spring Break?
    - \*Although this question still asks about Spring Break, it is an open-ended question and allows students to share a broad response. It does not make any assumptions.

## **Tier 2 Examples**

- Peer Mediation Programs
- Restorative Problem-Solving Circles
- Conflict-Management Small Group Skill Building Group
- Social-Skills Training

## **Tier 3 Examples**

- Individual Counseling Support
- Functional Behavioral Assessment & Behavior Intervention Plan

## **Make Connections**

### **Curriculum Connections**

Integrate SEL into all parts of the curriculum. At a quick glance, it may appear "easier" to find ways to teach SEL in the language arts standards, but it is important that SEL be integrated across the all content areas. Critical thinking, decision-making, perseverance, making connections, and conflict mediation spans all coursework and are key employability skills. As educators, it is our role to teach our students that SEL is not only vital for academic success, but it is also critical for students' college and career success.

### **Outside the Classroom Connections**

A common assessment strategy to gather baseline SEL data is student "hot-spot mapping," in which students identify 'hot spots' in the school where they feel or they perceive other students feel unsafe due to bullying or other social situations that result in exclusionary practices. What most schools discover through this process are areas that are typically unsupervised areas for short periods of time (e.g., restrooms, hallways, lunchroom, by their lockers, etc.). To help students transfer the SEL knowledge and skills being learned in the classroom, all educators need to be intentional about connecting the learning into these other areas of the school where the skills are often needed desperately.

# SECTION #2: PK-12

## SEL RESOURCES



### INDIANA'S SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING COMPETENCIES

This section is solely dedicated to providing sample activities and resources that demonstrate multiple ways educators can infuse the Indiana Social-Emotional Learning Competencies into daily practice.



# INDIANA'S SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING COMPETENCIES

## Sensory-Motor Integration

- ▶ the ability to have body awareness and recognize sensations in the body. Gaining sensory-motor integration is an important skill for managing transitions, changing routines, increasing alertness for learning, and improving regulation.

## Insight

- ▶ the ability to know your emotions and how they affect your thoughts and actions. Gaining insight is an important skill for building self-confidence, self-esteem, and empathy for others. Insight helps students recognize their own strengths and areas of growth.

## Regulation

- ▶ the ability to recognize and manage one's emotions. Regulation skills build positive self-control, positive self-discipline, and impulse control.

## Collaboration

- ▶ the ability to work well with others, including in the group and teamwork environment. Collaboration works to build positive communication and conflict management skills.

## Connection


- ▶ the ability to have strong social awareness, giving students the ability to take the perspectives of others and empathize with people of diverse backgrounds and cultures.

## Critical-Thinking

- ▶ the ability to make constructive choices and understand metacognitive strategies to enhance learning. Critical thinking skills build responsible decision-making, analytical, and critical inquiry skills which are necessary to approach learning from an innovative, creative, multicultural, and ethical lens.

## Mindset

- ▶ the ability to demonstrate cognitive flexibility and a willingness to learn. Developing mindset is a critical learning skill for building perseverance, adaptability, self-discovery, resilience, and the ability to receive and give constructive feedback.



# Resources for the Implementation of the Indiana Social-Emotional Learning Competencies

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*Each section below contains teaching activities,  
strategies, and tools that support the  
development of each of the  
7 Indiana social-emotional learning  
competencies.*

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# SENSORY-MOTOR INTEGRATION



## Tug of Peace

Materials: Long rope (tie to form a large circle—large enough so your class can fit around)

Directions: Place the rope in a circle. Invite the students (all of the students in your group/class) to take a seat around the outside of the rope circle and grab ahold of it. Tell them the goal of the game is for all of the students to raise themselves to a standing position by pulling on the rope. Share with them that if anyone falls down, then the group fails the task and must start over. Count to three and say, “Ready, set, go.” It is more difficult than it sounds!

## Speed Exploration

Materials: Whistle, timer

Directions: If you have access to a suitable outdoor area, give your students 60-90 seconds to find as many of a certain object as they can. For example, they could find as many whole fallen leaves as possible, or round stones, or twigs, etc. At the end of the 60-90 seconds, give students a set amount of time to return their findings to where you are. Next, you can group students or process findings in whatever way you find most appropriate for the content area/development of students.

### Quick Tips:

- Set clear boundaries for where students can explore and find objects.
- Set a timer for 60-90 seconds.
- Use a loud whistle or bell to signal the start and end of exploring/finding time.
- Build in a discussion/reflection time--try not to make a "competition"--rather a "what did you learn?" experience.

## Animal Walks

Animal walks are simple and fun exercises that anyone can do to get a quick dose of gross motor play in their day. Simply put, they are exercises that resemble the animals they are named for. Many of these movements require core strength, balance, and agility which are wonderful for sensory-input and regulating the sensory systems. In addition Animal Walks are an excellent source of “heavy work” which is perfect for helping children that are struggling with fidgets, wiggles, and even meltdowns.

Source & For More Animal Walk Information, Visit this site: [15 Animal Walks for Sensory Input](#)

Materials: No materials required

### Directions: **Crab Walk**

Start by squatting down close to the ground. Lean backwards and place your hands on the ground. You should look like a “table top” now. Now walk sideways, while holding your bottom off the ground and your back straight.

## Finger-painting

Materials: Finger-paints (variety of colors)

Directions: Use finger-paints and have students draw any picture/item; can be a 'free draw' or can connect to content (e.g., spelling words) -- additionally, connect to mindfulness and invite students to notice their experiences while finger-painting...what do they feel, smell, what thoughts have they had or feeling did it bring up?





## Working with Play Dough/Clay

Materials: Play dough and/or clay

Directions: Every person (from 3 to 99) likes to play with play dough! Give each student a small piece of play dough or clay and invite them to create an object that relates to some source of stress in their lives. When finished, invite everyone to share their object and source of stress (if they feel comfortable sharing)--when finished--they can smash the play dough back into a blob. It's fun and can be a great stress reliever!

## Guided Meditation Script

Meditation has been linked to increased ability to focus and to lowering depression, anxiety, and stress. Meditation is an act of focusing one's thoughts completely and fully. It is being present in the moment, silencing other thoughts and noise running through our minds. Neuroscience has shown that the brain can absorb information and retain memory when in a relaxed state. Meditation can help one achieve such a state, thereby improving a student's memory and attention [22].

Materials: Script

Directions: Provide students the script (can project or write on board). Invite students to join you in reading along and remind them to also focus on their breathing. Students can sit or stand.

*Today let's clear our minds of negative thoughts, and let's dare to fail and learn by trying. See yourself working and learning more each time you try. Clear your mind and let yourself feel the happiness you feel once you learn from something that didn't work. Now, focus on your breathing. Breathe in. And as you breathe out, say to yourself, "Through failure, I learn." Breathe in. "Through failure, I learn."*

## Guided Imagery Exercises

Guided imagery is a mindfulness process that uses visualization and imagination to bring awareness to the mind-body connection.

### Creating Your Magic Garden

*"Allow your eyes to gently close and focus on your breathing ... we're letting all our troubles float away ... in beautiful rainbow balloons. Imagine a beautiful colored rainbow floating above your head ... the purples and the blues ... the greens and the yellows ... the oranges and the reds ... and maybe some gold and silver.... Notice what colors your special rainbow is.... And as you breathe, this beautiful rainbow grows larger and larger ... and starts to gently wash over you ... to help you relax.... And to go inside and find that special calm place that waits for you each day."*

At this point have the child enter the gate and create their magic garden. You may suggest any plants, trees, flowers, fruits, etc.

*"Anything you want you can plant in this magic garden ... You may even plant seeds of peace ... and of joy and happiness ... and of calmness ... or any other qualities you would like to increase or bring in your life ... This is your own space ... This is a very magical time."*

### My Calm Place

Materials: Paper, pen, markers (drawing materials)

Directions: Find a quiet place and close your eyes.

- Think of the most calm, peaceful place you have ever been or ever seen. Picture yourself in that place.
- Describe Or Draw What It: Looks Like, Sounds Like, Smells Like, Feels Like.
- Remember, you can return here when you are feeling stressed or worried- (keep this picture with you)

[General Guided Imagery Walk Script](#)  
[More Imagery Exercises For Younger Students Can Be Found Here](#)  
[Woodland Walk Script](#)



## Mindfulness Exercises

### Rain Shower

Materials: No materials required

Directions: Have everyone sit in a large circle facing inward. The leader will start an action which will go to the next person one at a time around the circle until everyone joins in. They should keep on doing this action until the leader starts another movement which will also pass around the circle one by one. The group must copy the leader exactly, whether the action is slow or fast, loud or soft. The leader starts off by rubbing palms of hands gently together. Next, click your fingers quietly, and then loudly. Next slap hands on your thighs. Gradually getting louder, stomp your feet on the ground. After that, go back to slapping thighs, clapping hands, clicking fingers, rubbing palms, all the time getting quieter. One by one each person is silent and the rainstorm is over. [22]

### Sensory Walk

Materials: No materials required

Directions: Take the group outdoors to a garden/outdoor area. Allow the group to sit down in a circle and ask what animals or plants they would expect to see in this area. As humans, how do we receive most of our information about our surroundings? (Sight) What are our other senses? Now think about what it would be like to view the world without our sight. Ask the group to close their eyes (or use scarves) and listen. Read out the following prompt:

*"We are going to rely on our hearing and so we need absolute silence. I will ask different questions for you to think about, but don't answer until the end. Many creatures depend on sound for information about the world around them, such as bats and dolphins. Try to observe 3 sounds you can hear. If you didn't know where you were, would you be able to guess from the sounds around you? Other animals depend on smell to know more about their surroundings, such as dogs and pigs. Try to make out two smells in the air. Smell is very closely linked to memory. Do the smells trigger any memories for you? Finally, use your sense of touch. Cats have a very sensitive touch and use their whiskers when hunting. Can you find two different textures? Feel around where you are sitting...are there things that are wet, dry, soft, or hard? Now open your eyes."*

Process the activity with the students exploring what this experience was like for them. You can discuss, have students write or draw in a journal, or any other creative way to reflect on the sensory walk. [22]

### Food Mindfulness (& Sensory)

Materials: Bite sized candy, raisins, orange, chocolates, etc.(as long as the food is developmentally appropriate and you are mindful of any food allergies)

Directions:

1. Place the food in the palm of the students' hands.
2. First, while their eyes are closed, have them feel the texture of the food, smell it, etc.
3. Ask students to give you a single descriptive word.
4. Next, ask the students to open their eyes. How many students were correct? Did they know what the food item was just by using their sense of smell and touch?

» *Take a moment and discuss what it was like to use only the sense of touch and smell--process this with the students.*



## Mindfulness Exercises (cont.)

### Food Mindfulness (& Sensory) Cont.

5. Now using their sense of sight and other senses, check out the food item again, what new things do you notice? (Students usually come up with words about weight, texture, shape).
6. Then ask students to put the object on their tongues--**no chewing/eating yet**--and do some more observing and describing. What are you beginning to taste?
7. Finally, the students can chew a couple of chews to observe and describe any features (crunchy, sticky, etc.)--and then full on eating!

#### Process Questions:

- » What was it like taking this much time before eating the food?
- » What did you notice?
- » How often do you really taste your food? Why or why not?

### Mindful Minutes

Designate at least 2-3 times throughout the day to facilitate a minute of mindfulness. These practices can be a simple breathing technique or some other simple mindful technique. The key point is to make it preventive and not reactive—you don't want mindfulness to be a reactive or punitive tool.

### Compassion Meditation

#### Directions:

1. First, take a few deep, cleansing breaths and ground yourself in the present.
2. As you breathe deeply, focus on your heart and visualize softness, warmth, and compassion glowing in your chest. Repeat these phrases to yourself: "May I be happy. May I be well. May I be safe. May I be peaceful and at ease."
3. After a minute or two, visualize extending this energy to include somebody you care deeply about. Now repeat the phrases, filling in the person's name. For example, "May my mom/dad/sister/brother/friend be happy. May my mom/dad/sister/brother/friend be well. May my mom/dad/sister/brother/friend..."
4. Next, visualize extending the energy to somebody you feel neutrally about. Repeat the phrases with his or her name. For example, "May the bus driver be happy. May the bus driver be well. May the bus driver . . ."
5. Now extend the energy to somebody for whom you have negative feelings. Repeat the phrases with his or her name.
6. Finally, visualize extending this energy to the rest of the world.

As you become comfortable with this practice, try extending the length of time you spend at each stage, increasing the overall time spent on the meditation. [Source: Manage Stress Workbook](#)



## Mindfulness Exercises (cont.)

### Body Scan Meditation

The Body Scan Meditation can help you become more accepting/aware of areas of pain or discomfort and relieve tension and stress.

#### Directions:

To practice the Body Scan Meditation, get into a comfortable position. You might lie down on the floor or sit comfortably at your desk. Take a few deep, grounding breaths and gently bring your awareness to the present.

1. Pay attention to a specific body part, such as your left foot. As you breathe deeply, scan that part of your body for sensations. Notice the sensations you feel, but try not to get lost in thought. Gradually let your focus move to different body parts — each leg, your hips, stomach, chest, hands, arms, and head.
2. Practice mindfulness meditation with your focus on your body. Become aware of your mind's tendency to get lost in thought.
3. When you notice this happening, just let the thought go and gently redirect your attention back to your body. Try not to engage in the content of the thoughts.
4. If you have any pain or discomfort, just notice it, accept it, and continue scanning. Continue to scan each part of your body in this way until you have scanned your whole body. Source: [Manage Stress Workbook](#)

### Mindful Meditation

#### Directions:

1. Sit on a straight-backed chair or cross-legged on the floor.
2. Focus on an aspect of your breathing, such as the sensations of air flowing into your nostrils and out of your mouth, or your belly rising and falling as you inhale and exhale.
3. Once you've narrowed your concentration in this way, begin to widen your focus---become aware of sounds, sensations, and your ideas/thoughts.
4. Embrace and consider each thought or sensation without judging it good or bad. If your mind starts to race, return your focus to your breathing---then expand your awareness again.

## Additional Mindfulness Resources

GoNoodle [GoNoodle](#) makes movement and mindfulness an integral part of the day, at school and at home.



## Breathing Exercises

### Sesame Street: Common and Colbie Caillat - "Belly Breathe" with Elmo

With the help from Sesame Street and Colbie Caillat, teach your students belly breathing with this short and fun video. Link provided [here](#).

### SBS Exercise (Stand, Breathe, Sit)

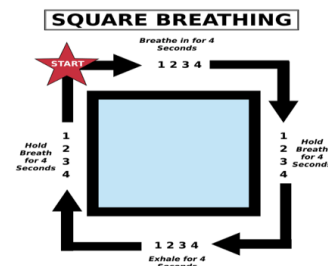
Simple breathing exercise.

- » Stand
- » Breathe
- » Sit

### Square Breathing Exercise

Square Breathing in 4 Steps

1. Breathe in through your nose for four counts.
2. Pause/hold your breath for four counts.
3. Exhale through your mouth for four counts.
4. Pause/hold your breath for four counts.



[Link to Full Size Square Breathing Visual Aid](#)

### Breath Awareness

Directions:

1. This breathing exercise asks students to lie on their bellies so that they can feel where the breath is in their body. If students can't lie on their bellies, have them place their left hand over their belly and their right hand over their chest.
2. If students are lying on the ground, they should be lying flat on their stomach and can use their hands as a pillow. If they are not lying on the ground, have them sit upright, both feet planted firmly on the ground, hands in position (left hand over their belly and their right hand over their chest).
3. Ask students to close their eyes if they are comfortable doing so.
4. Tell students to inhale through their nose in two parts. The first part of their inhale is into their belly. If they are on the ground, they can feel their belly press into the earth. If they are seated upright, they can feel their belly press into their hand. The second part of their inhale is into their chest, so if they are lying on the ground, they feel their chest press into the earth and if seated they press their chest into their hand.
5. Students also exhale through their nose in two parts. First, they exhale from their chest, feeling their chest rise away from the earth or fall away from their hand. Then, the second part of their exhale is from their belly, away from the earth or from their hand.
6. Have students repeat this 5-10 times.

Source & for more activities, Link to [Chill Out, Classroom Exercises for All Ages](#)

# INSIGHT



## Developing Personal Strengths

### Personal Collage

**Materials:** Paper, glue, magazines, any other items students want to add for their collages

**Directions:** Invite students to create personal collages illustrating personal qualities, including identifying personal strengths/assets/values.

### Finding Your Personal Strengths

It is important to help students discover, build, and truly 'own' their personal strengths. Here are some resources to aid in this work.

[HIGH 5 Test is a free strengths test](#)

[VIA Free Strengths Survey](#)

Link to [VIA Strengths List](#)

### Acrostic Poem

**Materials:** Paper, crayons, markers, paints (any creative items)

**Directions:**

Instruct students to create an acrostic poem using their name. Each letter needs to identify a personal strength. See example.



### Top 10 Employer Wish List

**Materials:** Family Feud template, paper

**Directions:** To help students connect personal strengths and future careers, begin brainstorming session about what qualities employers want from employees. List top 10 qualities employers are looking for when hiring. After discussion, share the final top 10 list with the class. *[Alternate option-- take ideas generated from students and create a Family Feud game]*

### What Are Your Strengths?

**Materials:** Pen/Pencil, Paper, Handout (find [here](#))

**Directions:**

1. Distribute the handout to students.
2. Using information on page 1, explain what strengths are.
3. Ask students to select their top 3-5 strengths. They can use the strengths on the list provided or create their own if they identify a strength that isn't on the list.
4. If they want, they can ask others for input on their strengths. Other methods to identify their strengths can include thinking about what they enjoy doing, when they feel most comfortable, and what energizes them.
5. After they identify a few of their strengths, have them answer the questions on the worksheet. Instruct them to think about how and where they use their strengths both at school and at home.
6. Go around the room -or break into small groups if the group is large-and ask people to share their strengths (if they are comfortable).





## Developing Emotional Awareness

### Pass the Hat/Bucket

**Materials:** Pictures of Feeling Faces, Hat or Envelope, Music

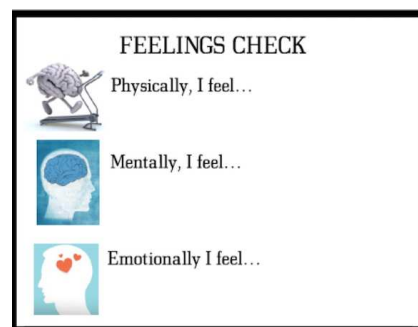
**Directions:** The teacher cuts out pictures that represent various feeling faces and places them in a hat (or large envelope) that is passed around the circle as music plays. When the music stops, the student holding the hat/bucket picks out a picture designating an emotion and is asked to identify it, express how they look when they feel that way, and/or describe a time when s/he felt that way.

*\*Possible modification: Ask students to connect an emotion to a character in a story you are reading.*

### Feelings Check

**Materials:** Can use the [Feelings Check Card](#), but it is not required

**Directions:** Take a few minutes throughout the day to do a “feelings check” with your students. It is also important to help students think about how feelings may be different regarding how they may be physically feeling, cognitively feeling and/or emotionally feeling.



### Paper Plate Feeling Face

**Materials:** Paper plates, Markers, Crayons

**Directions:**

Cut out pictures of different facial features. Each student chooses their eyes, nose, mouth, ears and hair, and sticks them on a paper plate to create a face. Ask students to create a face showing a specific feeling and then see if the class can guess the feeling when everyone is finished with their paper plate faces.

### Journaling

Journaling can promote and develop self-reflection in all ages by providing time to explore thoughts, feelings, actions, beliefs--can also help with the decision-making process. Visit this [site](#) for a resource for a teen journal.

### Feelings Faces

**Materials:** Paper, Markers, Crayons, any book/story

**Directions:** Invite students to draw faces that describe how they feel after listening to a story/book. Another option is to draw how they think the characters were feeling in the story.

### 4 Square Feelings: Building Emotional Literacy

**Materials:** Emotions written on strips of paper, Envelopes (optional), Multiple colors of 8×10 paper, pens, markers/colored pencils, Magazines, Scissors, Glue or Glue Sticks

**Directions:** Follow the steps in the lesson plan linked [here](#).







## Characteristics of Classrooms that Promote, Encourage, & Develop Emotional Vocabulary

- »»» Photos of people with various emotional expressions are displayed around the room
- »»» Books about feelings are available in the classroom library
- »»» Teachers label their own feelings when talking with students
- »»» Teachers notice and label student's feelings
- »»» Teachers draw attention to how a student's peer is feeling
- »»» Activities are planned to teach and reinforce emotional literacy
- »»» Students are reinforced with process praise for using feeling words
- »»» Efforts to promote emotional vocabulary occur daily and across all times of the day
- »»» Intentional activities and lessons to teach emotional awareness are embedded throughout the curriculum

## Vision Board

Create a Vision Board: Vision boards are used in all types of settings and can be used in the classroom as a valuable learning tool. Help children visualize what they desire, what makes them happy, and what they want for their future.. Precisely, when they have an image in their mind of what makes them successful, they are more likely to reach their own goals, and ultimately be successful in the classroom.

## Heart Map

This creative activity encourages students to consider what makes them feel happy and then ask students to draw this on paper. It's a great way to help them own and recognize their emotions and focus more on having a positive outlook. [can expand to other emotions/positive words that help students achieve success in the classroom]



## Using Affective Communication

**Tips to Respond to Behavior:** Using affective communication is an great tool to reinforce positive behaviors, to increase emotional awareness, to help develop awareness of personal strengths, and/or redirect negative behaviors with any member of the school community.

**Step 1:** Notice what YOU are feeling—YOUR own awareness of emotions is critical.

What has the student sparked within you? Has a trigger been activated? Do you need to take a few seconds before you respond? Identify the feeling and be ready to engage the student when you are in a calm state.

**Step 2:** Identify the behavior or action that you are wanting to address—separate the deed from the doer. Remember, it is not the student, it is the behavior. Regardless of how personal the comment or incident may have felt, it is important to remember that it is likely you are not the true target of this negative behavior and/or comment. As educators, we are working with students that have been hurt (trauma) and are now working hard to hurt and push away others. Don't give up on any student---they need you!

**Step 3:** Combine step 1 & 2. In an authentic and genuine manner, engage the student by sharing a simple affective statement. Start by sharing the feeling followed by the behavior/action that is connected with how you are feeling and/or how it impacted you--showing you care and support the student.

**Remember, it is imperative that you are calm, engaged, and show genuine connection when sharing an affective statement with a student.**

### Example of Affective Statement

*"I am having a hard time understanding what keeps happening between you and Sharice. Help me understand what happens that leads to you getting so angry and calling her these hurtful names."*



Link to the [Affective Communication](#) [handout](#).

## Learning the Hand Model of the Brain

Dr. Dan Siegel teaches the hand model of the brain. Click [here for a short video](#).

Click [here](#) for video explaining

"Flipping Your Lid" by Dr. Dan Siegel.

*\*Use for both Insight & Regulation.*

### Flip the Lid (Hand Model of the Brain)

Make a Fist with your thumb tucked inside your fingers. This is a model of your brain.



Figure 1. A model of the brain.

**Thumb** = Midbrain (Stem & Limbic) = Emotional Brain. This is where emotions and memories are processed. This is where the fight, flight & freeze is triggered.

**Fingers** = Cerebral Cortex = Rational Brain. Houses our ability to think and reason.

**Fingernails** = Prefrontal Cortex = Problem-Solving

When something triggers us, we are prone to "Flip our Lid" which means the Prefrontal Cortex (Fingernails) have a very poor connection with the Midbrain (Thumb), and we're not able to access the logical, problem-solving part of our brain. Our emotions are overriding our ability to think clearly.

-Dr. Dan Siegel



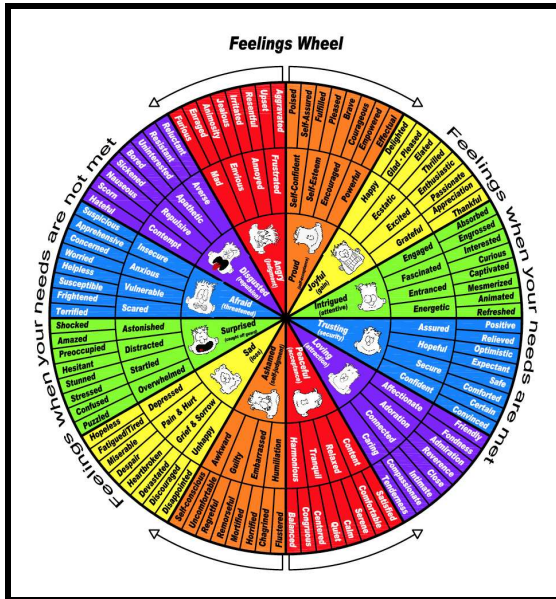
Figure 2. Flipping your lid.



## Resources For Emotional Awareness & Identifying Feelings

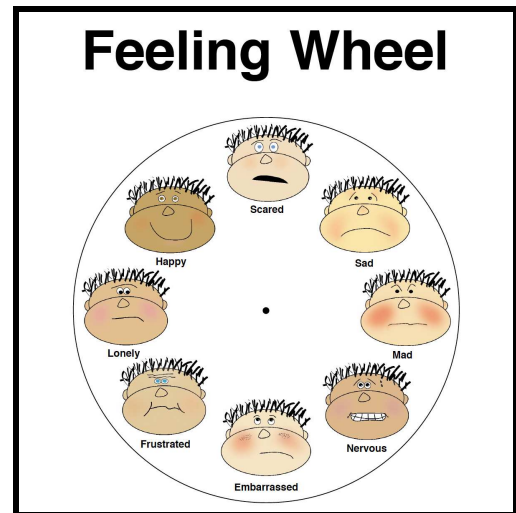
### Wheel of Emotions

Link to [Feelings Wheels-1](#).



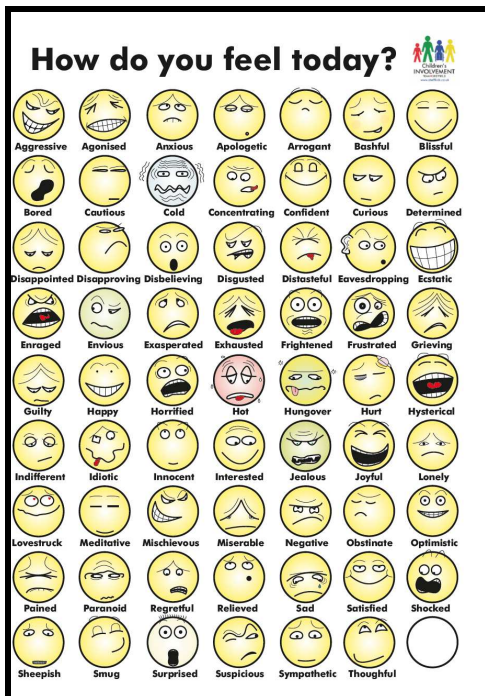
### Feeling Faces-Spinner Wheel Game Activity

Link to [Feeling Wheel-2](#). Students can practice storytelling using feelings or thinking of their own personal examples depending on where the spinner lands. Have fun with feelings!



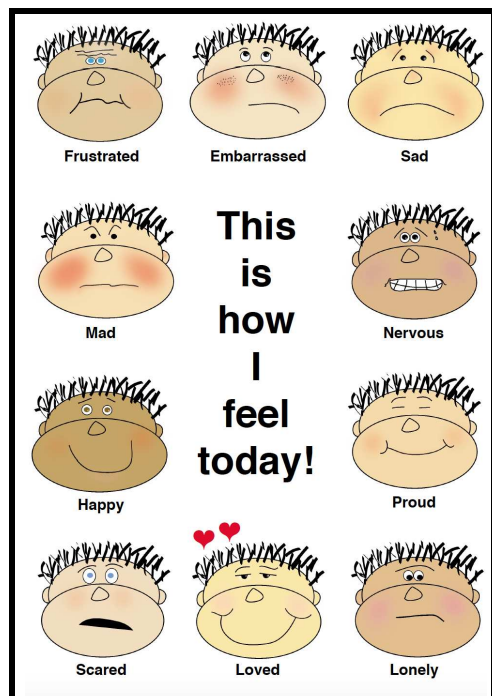
### Feeling Faces Chart-1

Link to Feelings Chart-[How Do You Feel Today?](#)



### Feeling Faces Chart-2

Link to [Feeling Faces Chart-2](#)



# REGULATION



## Emotional Planner

The feeling planner tool can be used to help alleviate anxiety about what has happened or with students that have a tendency of worrying about all of the tasks that can happen throughout the day. By mapping out the day's tasks, assigning emotions, and then coming up with strategies, the student has a plan for the day to address potential stressors.

Activity	Emotion	Strategy
Math test	anxious, nervous	drink of water Study with friends TALK TO TEACHER AFTER TEST
Assembly - 1pm	bores, excited, happy, anxious	plan to sit with friend bring a drink - Pledge my attention ask for permission of assembly sit on aisle so have more room
Bus evacuation	worried, scared, excited	ask for preview pair up with a friend

## Choose Your Own Adventure

Materials: Computer or paper/pencil

Directions: Students write a choose-your-own adventure story in which a character has choices about possible behaviors and then experiences logical/natural consequences. Students can work individually or in small groups.

## Discussion Prompts

Materials: Computer or paper/pencil

Directions: Students write a choose-your-own adventure story in which a character has choices about possible behaviors and then experiences logical/natural consequences. Students can work individually or in small groups.

- Discuss the difference between reacting and responding to emotions
- Describe a fictional or literary character that is impulsive; discuss the causes and the consequences of their behavior.

## Thought Sheets/Thinking Sheets

Self-reflection can be a simple and effective tool for students to begin to understand how their behaviors affect others and the classroom environment. Students use the "Thought sheet" to guide their reflective thinking to consider how their behavior impacted others and to think about what steps s/he needs to make to repair the harm.

\*Only use if you, as the educator, have fully explained this tool and will follow-up with the student to discuss what s/he shared on the sheet.

Link to a sample [Think Sheet](#).

## Journaling Activity

Journaling is a great activity for SEL programming. Below is a prompt to help students reflect on the impact of their actions.

- Many people dream of being successful, but their actions can sometimes hold them back.
- Think about a time in your life that your emotions got the best of you. What did you learn from this experience?
- What are some ways you can be sure that your actions help you to achieve your goals in life?



# REGULATION



## Games & Activities for Self-Regulation

### Freeze Dance

Materials: Music

Directions: Play music. Instruct students to move around (not to run) and when the music stops playing they need to freeze (stop moving). It is encouraged to use various types of music--think about ways to bring in different cultural music.

### Red Light, Green Light

Materials: No materials required--if you have a "stop light" or can project one on a screen, it can be helpful or add a visual component

Directions:

1. Before You Start: Make sure everyone know the rules and what happens if they move on a 'Red Light'.  
& How to move quickly and safely.
2. Set Up: Clearly define the playing area with a designated starting line and finish line.
3. How To Play: Start with everyone along the starting line,  
When you say 'Green Light' everyone will move towards the finish line,  
When you say 'Red Light' everyone must immediately stop.  
→ If players are still moving when you call 'Red Light', they must go back to the starting line.

Source: <https://www.playworks.org/resource/game-of-the-week-red-light-green-light/>

### Follow My Clap

The leader creates a clapping pattern. Students have to listen and repeat.

### Loud or Quiet

Journaling can promote and develop self-reflection in all ages by providing time to explore thoughts, feelings, actions, beliefs--can also help with the decision-making process. Visit this [site](#) for a resource for a teen journal.

### Simon Says

Students have to act only when the leader says "Simon Say ...". For example, if the leader says "Simon Says touch your toes" and all the students touch their toes. If the leader says "Touch your toes," no one should touch their toes. [can be a great teaching strategy in a foreign language class too]

### Blurt

Directions: Read a definition of a word and have students try to figure out what the word is For example, a question might be, "What is the state capital of Indiana?" When the student answers "Indianapolis," they win that turn. You can play in rounds -however, it is important that the only two students that can "blurt" out the answer are the two students selected for the question. Everyone else in the room must practice self-control--before the game, invite the class to come up with an agreed upon "consequence" for any student that "blurts" out of turn (e.g., first time student gets a warning, second time the student can no longer stay in the game, etc.,). The questions for the game can connect to course content or other social-emotional learning content. It is also a fun review game before a test!

# REGULATION



## Games & Activities for Self-Regulation (cont.)

### Perception Circle

Direct the students to form a circle. Choose a person to begin the activity. That person will whisper a word in the ear of the person sitting beside him or her. Once a student hears the word, that student then turns to the next person and whispers the first thing that comes into his or her mind. Repeat the process until everyone has had a turn. Before you start, remind students that each person at the end will say his or her word out loud in front of the entire group. Encourage each member of the group to pay attention to what is happening.

More lessons can be found here: [10 Lessons for Teaching Conflict Resolution Skills](#)

## Therapeutic Journaling/Stress Reduction Activity

Explain that expressing feelings is one of the best ways to alleviate stress and confront problems. But not everyone is comfortable talking to someone else. One way to express feelings in a completely private way is to write about them. This is called therapeutic writing, and it can take numerous forms.

Directions: Ask students to choose a special notebook, tablet, or binder that will be their personal journal. Spend a few minutes decorating/personalizing their journals. Their assignment is to write in their journals at least three times over the next week. The focus of the assignment is to write open and honestly about their feelings, their worries, their stressors, and what how they have tried to respond to their stress--not to worry about grammar, spelling--remind students they can even draw pictures if they feel like that is the best way to express themselves. Here are some ideas for journal prompts:

- Write a letter to someone you wish to talk to but you haven't been able to.
- Write a letter to yourself, saying the things you think you need to hear.
- Write a script between you and anyone else you'd like to talk to, imagining what the person might say to you when you tell them what's on your mind.
- Write about your day, focusing on what's bothering you or causing you stress and explore what might be causing this stress and what you might try to better cope with it.
- Write a poem expressing your feelings.
- Write a story in which one of the characters expresses your feelings.

After the week is up, review the students' journaling experience. Did they find it helpful, fun, or useful? Do any of the students think they'll continue writing as a way of coping with problems and stress?

## Anger Map

It is important to help students recognize what their body feels like (body sensations), their face looks like, and reflect on words they use and thoughts they have when they are angry. The Anger Map handout is a useful tool to walk students through these steps. Additionally, the handout provides students an opportunity to reflect on better ways to react to their anger and reflect on the consequences of their actions.

Materials: [Anger Map Handout](#) (provided here)

Directions: Use the Anger Map handout with students to help with building anger management skills.



# REGULATION



## Name It To Tame It

Work to grow and expand students' emotional vocabulary.

\*Why? Engaging the Prefrontal Cortex to think about naming/identifying feelings helps to lower the amygdala's emotional agitation.

Link to [Name It to Tame It](#).

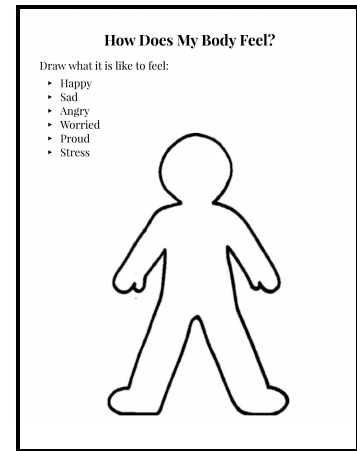
## How Does My Body Feel?

Help students think about how feelings are connected with their body. Emotions manifest in the body as physical sensations. The connection between our minds and our bodies is something we can instinctively feel. Ask students, "How much attention do you pay to your bodily sensations from moment to moment?"

Explain to students that emotional messages get through in three different ways:

1. our body (physical sensations),
2. our minds (thoughts, memories, experiences, values/beliefs, imagination)
3. our behavior (urges and actions)

The body map helps students connect feelings and body sensations. Share the ["How Does My Body Feel?"](#) handout with students and invite them to select a feeling. Think about the last time they felt this feeling and how their body's sensations when experiencing this feeling. What was happening in the body?



## Stress Relief Ideas

Directions: Provide students an opportunity to share stressors in their life. Next, brainstorm ideas for healthy stress relieving strategies. Provide a copy of the [Stress Relieving Ideas](#) handout to students to share ideas with students and engage in a discussion to process how they can incorporate coping strategies to address the stressors in their life. \*This activity can be partnered with the therapeutic journal activity.



# COLLABORATION



## Types of Communication

Materials: Pen/Pencils, Post-It Notes

Directions:

1. Present the three categories of communication – oral, written, and non-verbal and put each word up on the front board (or use three large sheets of paper, one for each word, if no board is available).  
2. Divide students into groups and give each group some post-it notes. Ask the groups to brainstorm examples of each category of communication and to write each example on a different post-it. They should then put the post-it notes under the correct category on the board. *[Alternative: Students can write their examples on the board/paper directly with markers]*

a. At this time, if students have NOT asked to add "Technology" as a category--please pause the activity and regroup the class. Share with the class that you would like to add "Technology" as the 4th category of communication. Ask the class to continue.

3. As a large group, look at the examples and add if necessary.

Process Questions:

- Which kinds of communication do you use most at school?
- What about at home with your parents/family?
- What about with your friends?
- How do you think communication is different for you now than when your parents were your age?
- What do you think are the advantages and disadvantages to these changes?

## Speech Activity

Students will explore differences between written and oral communication by comparing their reading of a transcript of a speech and a viewing of the speech being presented.

Materials: Transcript of Derek Sivers' speech, "How to start a movement" & Access to computer/video clip

Directions:

Distribute the transcript of Derek Sivers' speech, "How to start a movement"

[This is a short TED speech; TED is an organization whose mission is to spread great ideas, so they have speakers from all over the world with all kinds of expertise and they make the speeches available online.]

**FIRST:** Have Students read the speech individually.

Process Questions:

- What are the main arguments of his talk?
- How does Sivers support his argument and develop his ideas?
- Based on his words, what communication style do you imagine that Sivers has?

**SECOND:** Watch the [video of the speech](#)

**LASTLY:** Process Questions:

- Now that you've seen Sivers giving his speech, did your opinions change?
- What do you think about his communication style?
- Did he effectively communicate?
- What made it effective (or not)?
- Do you think Sivers is right about how to start a movement?

# COLLABORATION



## Fantasy Career

As an introduction to one another or a group game activity, ask each participant to share with the group what his/her fantasy career would be if s/he could do anything for a future career.

Directions:

1. Ask each participant to briefly explain what this occupation, trade, or job might be.
2. As participants share this information, occasionally ask clarifying questions about these fantasy careers, such as if the participant has ever done anything like this in the past or why s/he is interested. Encourage students in the class to also ask clarifying questions--shows good listening and communication skills

## Journaling/Discussion Questions

- Think about a time when you were part of a group/team and things worked really well, and a time when things didn't work out so well. What were the situations and what made the differences?
- How is conflict resolution portrayed on TV and in movies?  
\*If you choose, you can show a clip from a television show or movie of a conflict.  
How effective are the strategies used by these characters? Do you think what you or others see on TV or the movies impacts how people respond to conflict? How so?

## Communication Activities

- Role-Play: Role-play situations that are constructive or destructive to communication.
- Partner Activity: With a partner, the first student tells a story, the second asks clarifying questions

## What Would You Do?

Materials: [What Would You Do? Handout](#), pens/pencils

Directions: Place students in small groups. Give each group a scenario and ask each group to discuss what options the student has in this scenario. What is the "conflict" in this situation? What decision might this student be struggling with and why? What are some options? What do you think is the best decision and why?

- How did your group come to this decision?

# COLLABORATION



## Cooperative Learning Games

### ***Cooperative Learning Is Fundamental To Collaboration***

*Cooperative learning provides multiple benefits to the student learning environment. It can help build relationships between students, improve communication skills, build conflict management skills, and engage students in the learning process.*

### **New from Old [Mindset & Collaboration]**

Materials: Old board games, dice, playing cards, plastic chips, or any other items that could be used to build a board game

Directions:

1. Place students in small groups (usually it is best to work in groups of 4-6 students). Give each group an old board game and share with the group where they can find additional supplies if they need them.
2. Explain to the entire class (after each group has their old board game) that the task is to create a new group game from the old board game they have been given. They can use any of the supplies in the original game and any supplies at the shared station (the area available to the entire class). The new game does not need to reflect any aspect of the old game. It can be completely new and innovative. Encourage them to be creative!
3. The final step for the new game is to create instructions. Each group needs to develop a set of clear rules for their game that is included on the instruction sheet. Other items that may be necessary could be details for set-up for the game.

### **Process Questions:**

- How did your group decide on the goals of your game?
- How did your group work together?
- What was difficult about this task?
- How did you overcome any obstacles?
- What was enjoyable/fun about this task?

### **Worst-Case Scenario**

Create a scenario in which students would need to work together and solve problems to succeed, like being stranded on a deserted island or getting lost at sea. Ask them to work together to come up with a solution that ensures everyone arrives safely. Encourage them to find a solution that uses a democratic approach — everyone must agree to the final solution.

*Skills: Communication, collaboration, empathy, critical-thinking skills, problem-solving*

Link to [Lost at Sea scenario](#).

Link to [Moon Landing scenario](#).

Link to [Then and Now NASA and Jamestown Education scenario](#).

Link to [Island Adventure scenario](#).



## Cooperative Learning Games (cont.)

### **If You Build it...**

Materials: Various items (e.g., pipe cleaners, marshmallows, straws, toothpicks, etc.)

Directions: This team-building game is flexible. Simply divide students into teams and give them equal amounts of a certain material, like pipe cleaners, blocks, or even dried spaghetti and marshmallows. Next, give them something to construct. The challenge can be variable (think: Which team can build the tallest, structurally-sound castle? Which team can build a castle the fastest?). You can recycle this activity throughout the year by adapting the challenge or materials to specific content areas.

### **Keep it Real**

This open-ended concept is simple and serves as an excellent segue into problem-based learning. Challenge students to identify and cooperatively solve a real problem in their schools or communities. You may set the parameters, including a time limit, materials and physical boundaries.

### **Labyrinth**

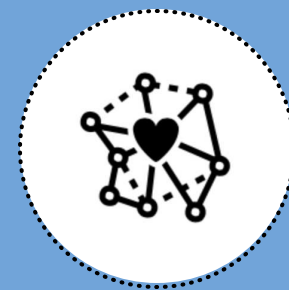
Team building games help young people develop a range of skills. They can be great fun, and beyond the more general learning goals, they can also be a useful entry point to teaching themes or to reinforce various social emotional competencies (e.g., collaboration, connection, mindset, critical-thinking, etc.). The aim of Labyrinth is for your group to work together to all find their way through the maze. There is only one correct path through the maze (created by you on your answer grid.) The path can go left, right, forward, or diagonally. Link to [Labyrinth resource](#).

### **Reflective Questions: Building Group Membership Skills**

- List the kinds of groups you have been a member of [e.g., clubs, sports, family, friendship, etc.]
- How do you tend to act in group situations?
- How would you like to act, ideally, in group situations?
- What is the most enjoyable or satisfying group you have been a member of, and what made it so good? [your favorite group experience]
- What is the least enjoyable or satisfying group you have been a member of, and why was the experience a negative one?
- From your experience to date, what skills do you have that may contribute to working successfully in a group?
- From your experience so far, what group skills do you think you need to work on?

*Adapted from Maskill & Race (1996), Personal and professional development for scientists, Unit 2, pp. 4-5.*

# CONNECTION



## Alike or Different?

**Background:** Share with students that today they will be planning a trip to the moon. Ask the students to think about if they could only take one other student with them on this trip, what kind of person would they want to join them. Instruct them not to think about a specific person, but to think about specific qualities they would want in this person.

**Materials:** Pen/Pencils, Notecards

**Directions:**

1. Distribute 3 x 5 notecards to all the students and have them write down 3 qualities that would describe their ideal person. Tell the students NOT to write their names on the cards.
2. Next, collect the cards and randomly redistribute the cards back to the class. Invite each student to share the qualities on the cards. Also, tell the students it is okay if they get their own card back because no one will know it is their card because no one put their name on the cards. As students read the qualities, write the responses on the board. If you notice the same quality is shared multiple times, just place a tally mark beside that quality to help identify a pattern.

**Process Questions:**

- Would it be best to choose a travel partner that is very similar to you or different than you?
- What do you notice by the words that you see on the board?
- Would you like to add any qualities to the master list?

## Be A Changemaker

Changemakers use peaceful means to bring about changes big and small. Show students what this means by reading, for instance, *The Lorax*, and follow up with a study of Dr. Wangari Maathai, a Kenyan woman who won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2004 for her work replanting trees. Ask students to consider the following questions:

- What was the problem he/she was trying to solve?
- Who was involved or affected?
- Why was it hard to solve the problem?

To make changemaking personal and relevant, ask families to honor their own changemakers, and invite parents and grandparents in to present them to the class. Create “wall of changemakers” in your classroom, showcasing faces and stories of people you’ve studied, as well as individuals from their own communities. Finally, take students into the community to practice changemaking firsthand: for instance, have them plant trees at a local park, serve food at a homeless shelter, or any other service activity that is a priority for the students. Link to

[Changemaker Learning Lab.](#)

## Analyze civil/democratic responsibilities

1. From the perspective of the custodian (or another service person in the school), write a reflection about your perceived daily routine and share your perspectives with your class.
2. Design a service project to practice environmental responsibility.
3. Write a story about a city that ignored environmental responsibilities.

# CONNECTION



## Acrostic Empathy Poem

**Materials:** Paper, Markers, Crayons, Paints (whatever creative method preferred)

**Directions:** Instruct students to create an Acrostic poem defining EMPATHY, For example:

E = Everyone,  
M = Me,  
P=People,  
A = All,  
T = Teachers,  
H = Help,  
Y= You

## Play "Empathy Charades"

**Directions:** Ask for a group of volunteers. Secretly assign them each an emotion. Tell them that they will have to act and express themselves in a way that shows their emotion. Ask the remaining students to guess what emotion each student is expressing.

Possible emotions for "Empathy Charades":

- Fear
- Pride
- Jealousy
- Disappointment
- Annoyed
- Shy
- Grateful
- Irritated

## Empathy Books & Lessons

This resource lists books and links to lessons connected to the topic of empathy development.

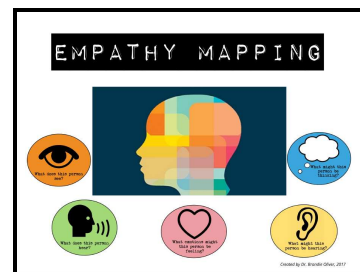
[Empathy Initiative Project Books & Links to Possible Lessons](#)

## Empathy Map

This tool (empathy map) can be used in several different ways and/or in different situations. Students can use it to think about how a specific character may be thinking, feeling, etc. or in response to a video/film that you just viewed. The empathy map can be used in conflict resolution --by expanding perspective-taking skills. Two Empathy Mapping Resources available.

[Link to Empathy Map-1.](#)

[Link to Empathy Map-2.](#)



## Who's In Your Circle?

Facilitate an exercise with students to help them reflect on who is inside and outside their circle. Discuss why and how they can expand the circle of concern and care.

**Materials:** Markers, student journals, paper

**Directions:** Open by asking students these two questions: [allow 5-10 minutes for writing]

1. Who at school is inside your circle of concern?
  2. Who at school is not currently in your circle of concern?
    - You can discuss with students about not identifying specific people/students and/or including "groups" of students.
  3. Why are these people (or groups) outside your circle of concern?
  4. How might their being outside your circle of concern affect them? How might it affect you? How might it affect the community as a whole?
- Final step is taking action and brainstorming how to expand the circle of care, concern and empathy.

The full instructions to this activity can be found at this link to the ["How to Guide: Circle of Concern"](#)

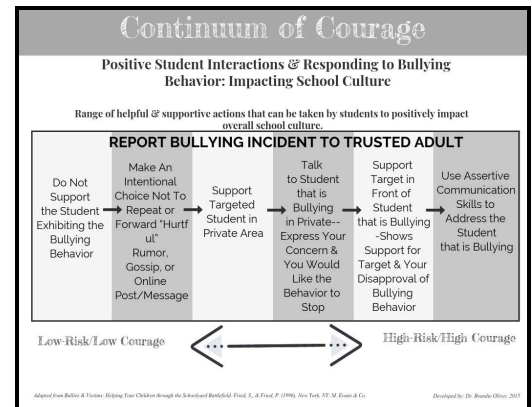


# CONNECTION



## Barriers To Empathy

Discuss with students some of the potential barriers to empathy, like stereotypes, stress, or fears of social consequences for helping an unpopular peer. Share specific strategies to overcome them. For example, use the "[Continuum of Courage](#)" handout to demonstrate to students how they can take action at various levels within their school community and make a difference to positively make a change regarding bullying prevention and intervention. Another great activity is to encourage *Intentional Acts of Kindness*, possibly make this an ongoing tradition at your school or in your classroom--instead of making it a designated month, or theme.



## Culturally Responsive Practices

### Get To Know Your Students

The most important practice or action step is to build relationships. It is for all students to know you value them and it shows you care enough about them to learn their names (and proper pronunciation), their interests, and any other information you decide to ask.

Here are some ideas on how to gather information about your students:

- Surveys/questionnaires
- Brief One-on-One Interviews
- Get To Know You games
- Information Sheets (Student and/or Parent sheet)

### Students' Cultural Background

It is essential to demonstrate to students and families that you value and are working to understand their culture. Try to find ways to bring in the student's cultural background/worldview into your teaching and connect to the material/lessons in the classroom. If the student is comfortable, provide multiple opportunities to share his/her story. The classroom needs to be a place where everyone is continuously learning with and from each other.

### Integrate local community issues into the classroom lessons and discussions

Bring students together for group discussions when an event happens in your community, in the nation, or globally. Possible questions:

- How does this impact your class? your school? your students' future?
- What can be done to address these issues?

### Encourage & Invite Student Initiated Projects

Students are encouraged to offer ideas on projects or to pitch ideas for possible units of study.











## Culturally Responsive Practices (cont.)

### Classroom Environment

Make sure your classroom contains culturally diverse learning materials, including a culturally diverse library of books (both in characters and authors). It is also important that every student in your class can "see" themselves in your room. Look around to ensure there are visual images of diversity on bulletin boards, classroom posters, in textbooks and other instructional materials. This representation is an important reminder that everyone is valued, belongs, and matters.

#### Tips to Practice Inclusiveness & Cultural Responsiveness

<b>Power In Knowing Names</b>  <p>Make sure you know how to accurately pronounce each student's name. A name is an important part of one's identity.</p> <p><a href="#">Click here for more information.</a></p>	<b>Courageous Conversations</b>  <p>Be aware of your own communication style and comfort level with conflict. Be ready to engage in a courageous conversation when/if you hear a cultural inequity. Silence is compliance.</p>
<b>Expand Students' Knowledge &amp; Understanding</b>  <p>Pay attention to all religious holidays and cultural traditions—not just the ones your school recognizes. Help expand students' knowledge and understanding by sharing religious and cultural traditions by exposing them to religions and traditions outside of their own.</p> <p><small>This website provides additional information.</small></p>	<b>Challenge Stereotypes</b>  <p>Challenge stereotypes. Offer another side of the story by challenging assumptions and/or stereotypes. Use your personal experiences and knowledge to point out how a stereotype or an assumption presented is harmful and disruptive to the learning environment.</p>
<b>Actively Listen: Listen To Understand</b>  <p>Practice active listening. Listening is an essential element of any courageous conversation—particularly when difficult or emotionally charged issues are being discussed. Remember, it is most important to listen to understand, and not to listen only to respond.</p>	<b>Expanding Your Own Perspective: Lifelong Learning</b>  <p>Be open to learning about others' viewpoints. The goal of dialogue isn't winning a debate or persuading others. It's about learning to see someone else's viewpoint, expanding your lens, and better understanding yourself.</p>

### School-Family Collaboration

Communication is important with all families. However, it is especially important with families that may need extra support due to language barriers, socioeconomic barriers, or other cultural barriers. Sending home regular newsletters to keep families updated on what is happening in the classroom and how families can support learning is a great tool—however, think about translation issues, whether or not the newsletter is getting home, etc. Additionally, offering workshops to families (both at school and in the community—go where the families live) is a great way to help encourage families to be involved in their student's educational journey.

Link to [Inclusiveness & Cultural Responsiveness Practices Handout](#).

### Empathy Toolkit

Toolkit for Promoting Empathy in Schools: This toolkit contains tips and tools, lesson plans and examples, and, most importantly, insights that can help inform everything from how you design your classroom to your daily interactions with students and colleagues.

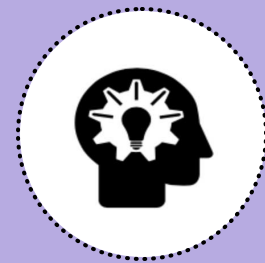
[Link to A Toolkit for Promoting Empathy in Schools](#)

### Empathy Video

*Sesame Street: Mark Ruffalo-Video About Empathy*

Brief [video from Sesame Street](#) to help children learn and understand empathy.

# CRITICAL-THINKING



## Decision-Making: Using a T-Chart

Materials: T-Chart, Pens/Pencils

Directions: Place students in working groups.

1. Invite students to brainstorm a problem (current event, problem in school they would like to address, or you could provide a problem scenario to each group).
2. Distribute a T-Chart to each group. Explain that each group will take time (at least 10 minutes) to brainstorm ideas to solve this problem. Review with the students that during brainstorming that all ideas are welcome. It is not the time to evaluate if a possible solution is either good or bad.
3. Label the T-Chart as appropriate to fit the topic of your problem, common labels include: "pros/cons," or "strengths/weaknesses"
4. Next, instruct the groups to start reviewing and evaluating each idea and placing the ideas into the appropriate categories on the T-Chart.
5. When groups are finished, ask each group to share their final decision and what this process was like for their group.

Process Questions:

- How did the brainstorming process work in your group?
- Was it difficult to narrow down ideas? What was your process?
- How did everyone contribute?
- How effective was the T-Chart?
- What did you learn from this experience?
- What would you do different next time?
- Would you use a T-Chart to help you make a decision in your personal life? If yes, why? If no, why not?

Link to [Decision-Making T-Chart](#).

## Cause/Effect Diagram

Materials: Paper, Pen/Pencil

Directions:

Ask students to draw a cause and effect diagram of behavior choices and their effect on goal success. Please refer to ["How to Use Cause and Effect Diagram"](#) for additional details on using this strategy.

## Deconstructing Decision-Making: Historical Perspective

Materials: Historical quote

Directions:

Read a quote from a famous historical figure (i.e. John f. Kennedy, Martin Luther King, Abraham Lincoln, George Washington, Adolf Hitler, etc.) Have students identify a model of decision-making they believe was used by that person. Explain why/how they came up with this finding. Students can also find historical literature pieces and work to figure out how these people made decisions. Information has changed--so get students thinking about how these people made decisions and who influenced their thinking.

## Advocacy & Action

Directions: Advocacy is an essential SEL skill.

Support students in their leadership growth and developing their own passion and student voice. Taking on large social issues, such as homelessness, domestic violence, or bullying can be both appealing and overwhelming to teens. [DoSomething.org](#) and [VolunteerMatch.org](#) can help identify concrete actions steps and spark ideas for next steps.



## What Type of Decision?

Materials: Paper, Pen/Pencils

Directions: Ask students to write on a piece of paper all of the decisions that they can remember making so far today. (Examples: what to wear, what they ate for breakfast/lunch, if they brought their lunch to school, etc.) Include all types of decisions on the list. Allow about 3–5 minutes for students to write. Now, ask students to go back through the list and rate their decisions on a scale from 1 to 10, with a rating of “1” meaning an automatic or “habitual” decision, and a rating of “10” meaning a decision that requires careful studying and thought.

**1 -- You didn't make these decisions any thought (or maybe someone else made the decision for you).**

**10 -- You gave these decisions A LOT of thought!**

Tally up how many 1–4's, 5–7's and 8–10's.

\_\_\_\_\_ 1–4's

\_\_\_\_\_ 5–7's

\_\_\_\_\_ 8–10's

Process Questions:

- What does this exercise tell you about how you make most of your decisions?
- What process do you use when you make decisions that rank higher--maybe above 7?
- What happens when you make a bad decision?
- Who helps you make decisions?

## Metacognition

### Learning Journals [Critical-Thinking; Mindset]

One way to help students monitor their own thinking is through the use of personal learning journals. Assign weekly questions that help students reflect on *how* rather than what they learned. Questions for students to include in their personal learning journals could include:

- What was easiest for me to learn this week?
- What was most challenging for me to learn? Why?
- For my quiz/test, what strategies worked well to help me prepare?
- For my quiz/test, what strategies were not very helpful in my preparation? What could I do differently next time?
- What learning habit worked best for me in to achieve my learning goals? How so?
- What study and/or learning habit will I try or improve upon next week?

Encourage creative expression through whatever journal format works best for learners, including mind maps, blogs, vlogs (video blog), diaries, lists, e-tools, etc.



## Metacognition (cont.)

### Reflective Writing: Sentence Starters

Below provides several sentence starters you can use to prompt student self-reflection. Click [here](#) for a full page list of reflection prompts.

#### Insights Into What You Think and Feel About the Ideas or Issues

1. One of the things that surprised me was ...
2. I still am shocked by ...
3. I keep thinking about....
4. I really didn't understand ....
5. I felt really frustrated when.....
6. It seems to me that the question I have to consider is.....
7. When I heard the speaker I felt.....
8. Something I would like to find more about is .....

## Classroom Assessment Tools

**Classroom Assessment Tools (CAT) are a variety of tools/strategies that assist in building metacognitive thinking. Below are several CAT tools.**

### One-Sentence Summary

#### Description:

This simple technique challenges students to answer the questions "Who does what to whom, when, where, how, and why?" (represented by the letters WDWWWHW) about a given topic, and then to synthesize those answers into a simple informative, grammatical, and long summary sentence.

#### Step-by-Step Procedure:

1. Select an important topic or work that your students have recently studied in your course and that you expect them to learn to summarize.
2. Working as quickly as you can, answer the questions "Who Did/Does What to Whom, When, Where, How and Why?" in relation to that topic. Note how long this first step takes you.
3. Next, turn your answers into a grammatical sentence that follows WDWWWHW pattern. Note how long this second step takes.
4. Allow your students up to twice as much time as it took you to carry out the task and give them clear direction on the One-Sentence Summary technique before you announce the topic to be summarized.

Link to [One Sentence Summary Source Handout](#).



## Classroom Assessment Tools (cont.)

### Minute Paper

Description: No other technique has been used more often or by more college teachers than the Minute Paper. This technique -- also known as the One-Minute Paper and the Half-Sheet Response -- provides a quick and extremely simple way to collect written feedback on student learning. To use the Minute Paper, an instructor stops class two or three minutes early and asks students to respond briefly to some variation on the following two questions: "What was the most important thing you learned during this class?" and "What important question remains unanswered?" Students write their responses on index cards or half-sheets of scrap paper and hand them in.

Step-by-Step Procedure:

1. Decide first what you want to focus on and, as a consequence, when to administer the Minute Paper. If you want to focus on students' understanding of a lecture, the last few minutes of class may be the best time. If your focus is on a prior homework assignment, however, the first few minutes may be more appropriate.
2. Using the two basic questions from the "Description" above as starting points, write Minute Paper prompts that fit your course. Try out your Minute Paper on a colleague or teaching assistant before using it in class.
3. Plan to set aside 5-10 minutes of your next class to use the technique, as well as time later to discuss the results.
4. Before class, write one or, at the most, two Minute Paper questions on the board or overhead.
5. At a convenient time, hand out index cards or half-sheets of scrap paper--or create a Google form.
6. Unless there is a very good reason to know who wrote what, direct students to leave their names off the papers or cards--or make sure the Google form is anonymous.
7. Let the students know how much time they will have (two to five minutes per question is usually enough), what kinds of answers you want (words, phrases, or short sentences), and when they can expect your feedback/what your plan is to do with the results.

Link to [Minute Paper Reference Handout](#).

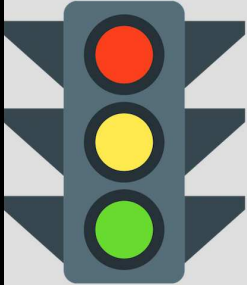
### Exit Tickets

Quick forms to check for understanding; helps educators know what students have learned, what content they still need to learn, and what content has particularly been enjoyable. Examples on the next page.



## Exit Ticket Examples

**EXIT TICKET**



What is one thing that stopped my learning today?

What is one question I still have after today's lesson?

What is one new thing I learned and understood today?

**3-2-1 Exit Slip**

**3** What are three things you learned today?

**2** What are two things that you want to learn more about?

**1** What is one question you still have?

**TICKET OUT THE DOOR**

WHAT DID YOU LEARN TODAY?

WHAT DO YOU STILL HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT AFTER TODAY'S LESSON?

**EXIT TICKET**

Link to [Exit Tickets](#).



## Problem-Solving

### Pro and Con Grid

Description: At one time or another, most people have jotted down quick lists of pros and cons to help them think more clearly about a pressing decision. The Pro and Con Grid turns that familiar decision-making exercise into a simple Classroom Assessment Technique with many possible applications.

#### Step-by-Step Procedure:

1. Focus on a decision, a judgment, a dilemma, or an issue that has teaching and learning implications in your discipline and for your students.
2. Write out a prompt that will elicit thoughtful pros and cons in relation to this issue or dilemma. You may wish to indicate a specific point of view that students you are hoping students will begin to explore. Doing so will make the pros and cons more comparable.
3. Let students know how many pros and cons you expect and how they are to be expressed. For example, are parallel lists of words and phrases adequate, or should the pros and cons be expressed in sentences?

### Survey, Question, Read (SQR)

#### What is the SQR strategy?

The SQR strategy involves expansion and discussion between teacher and students. These discussions often lead to a better student understanding of the problem. This strategy was developed to help students arrive at their own solutions through rich discussion.

#### How do I use SQR?

##### Survey

- Read the problem
- Paraphrase in your own words

##### Question

- Question the purpose of the problem
- What is being asked?
- What are you ultimately trying to determine?

##### Read

- Reread the question
- Determine the exact information you are looking for
- Eliminate unnecessary information
- Prepare to devise a plan for solving the problem

Reference: [http://floridarti.usf.edu/resources/topic/academic\\_support/kops/class\\_strategies.pdf](http://floridarti.usf.edu/resources/topic/academic_support/kops/class_strategies.pdf)





## Problem-Solving (cont.)

### Problem-Solving IDEAL Method

**Description:** This tool helps guide students through the problem-solving process. Instruct students to work through each step of the IDEAL method to help identify a solution, act on the selected solution and then reflect on the outcome. Below are the steps of the IDEAL method.

- I identify the Problem
- Define and Represent the Problem
- Explore Possible Strategies or Solutions
- Act on a Selected Strategy or Solution
- Look Back, Reflect and Evaluate the Selected Solution

Link to [Problem-Solving IDEAL Method Handout](#)

**PROBLEM-SOLVING WORKSHEET**

This worksheet will help guide you through the problem-solving process. Work through each step of the IDEAL method to help identify a solution, act on your selected solution and then reflect on the outcome. Below are the steps to the IDEAL method.

**IDEAL Method**

- 1 Identify the Problem
- 2 Define and Represent the Problem
- 3 Explore Possible Strategies or Solutions
- 4 Act on a Selected Strategy or Solution
- 5 Look Back, Reflect and Evaluate the Selected Solution

<b>I</b>	Identify the Problem
<b>D</b>	Define and Represent the Problem
<b>E</b>	Explore Possible Strategies or Solutions
<b>A</b>	Act on a Selected Strategy or Solution
<b>L</b>	Look Back, Reflect and Evaluate the Selected Solution

### Clue Me In

An interactive detective game encourages problem-solving, critical thinking and cognitive development. Collect a number of items that are associated with a specific profession, social trend, place, public figure, historical event, animal, etc. Assemble actual items (or pictures of items) that are commonly associated with the target answer. Place them all in a bag (5-10 clues should be sufficient.) Then have a student reach into the bag and one by one pull out clues. Choose a minimum number of clues they must draw out before making their first guess (2-3). After this, the student must venture a guess after each clue pulled until they guess correctly. See how quickly the student is able to solve the riddle.

Source: <https://education.cu-portland.edu/blog/classroom-resources/5-problem-solving-activities-for-the-classroom/>

### Survivor Scenarios

Create a pretend scenario for students that requires them to think creatively to make it through. An example might be getting stranded on an island, knowing that help will not arrive for three days. The group has a limited amount of food and water and must create shelter from items around the island. Encourage working together as a group and hearing out every student that has an idea about how to make it through the three days as safely and comfortably as possible.

Source: <https://education.cu-portland.edu/blog/classroom-resources/5-problem-solving-activities-for-the-classroom/>

# MINDSET

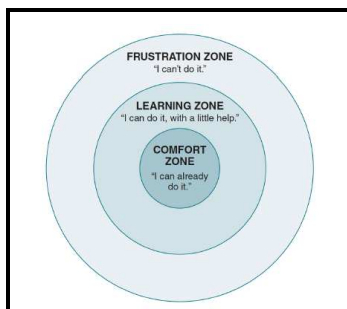


## Growth Mindset Feedback-Sticker Sheet

Here is an alternative feedback sheet that can be used on student work instead of traditional "smiley" faces or "Super"-- these options reinforce growth mindset phrases. Link to [Growth Mindset Feedback Sticker Sheet](#).

## Zone of Proximal Development

Work with students to help them stay in the "Learning Zone"--knowing that struggle and challenge is a good thing and to find meaning and learning from their mistakes.



## Journal and/or Discussion Prompt

- What are common responses to failures and disappointments?
- Describe three positive things you could do after you fail.
- Describe what responsibility means to you with at least 2 specific examples.

## Learning Journals

One way to help students monitor their own thinking is through the use of personal learning journals. Assign weekly questions that help students reflect on how rather than what they learned. Questions for students to include in their personal learning journals could include:

- What was easiest for me to learn this week?
- What was most challenging for me to learn? Why?
- For my quiz/test, what strategies worked well to help me prepare?
- For my quiz/test, what strategies were not very helpful in my preparation?
- What could I do differently next time?
- What learning habit worked best for me in to achieve my learning goals? How so?
- What study and/or learning habit will I try or improve upon next week?

Encourage creative expression through whatever journal formats work best for learners, including mind maps, blogs, vlogs (video blog), diaries, lists, e-tools, etc.

## Classroom Posters: Reinforcing Growth Mindset & Positivity With Visual Cues

This is just one of many free resources available at this [site](#).



## Ted Talks Promoting Growth Mindset

**The Power of Believing You Can Improve:** Dr. Carol Dweck researches “growth mindset” — the idea that we can grow our brain's capacity to learn and to solve problems. In this talk, she describes two ways to think about a problem that's slightly too hard for you to solve. Are you not smart enough to solve it ... or have you just not solved it yet? This video is a great introduction to this influential field.

**Why You Need to Fail:** By Derek Sivers

The importance of failure – for effective learning, growth mindset, and quality through experimentation.

**Helping Students Learn Growth Mindset:** by Dr. Julie Schell

Dr. Julie Schell describes the importance of mindset and how to encourage a growth mindset in students.

## Mindset Quotes

Spark a conversation or invite students to journal using one of the following quotes--note the growth mindset theme of the quotes.

*"Whether you think you can or you think you can't. You're right."*

~Henry Ford

*"It's not that I'm so smart, it's just that I stay with problems longer."* – Albert Einstein

*"Look at a stone cutter hammering away at his rock, perhaps a hundred times without as much as a crack showing in it. Yet at the hundred-and-first blow it will split in two, and I know it was not the last blow that did it, but all that had gone before."* – Jacob A. Riis

*"What do you do when you first learn to swim? You make mistakes, do you not? And what happens? You make other mistakes, and when you have made all the mistakes you possibly can without drowning – and some of them many times over – what do you find? That you can swim. Well – life is just the same as learning to swim! Do not be afraid of making mistakes, for there is no other way of learning how to live!"* – Alfred Adler

*"Money grows on the tree of persistence."* – Japanese Proverb



## Socratic Circles & Socratic Questions

### The Socratic Questioning Technique

The Socratic Questioning technique is an effective way to explore ideas in depth. It can be used at all developmental levels and is a helpful tool for all teachers/content areas. It can be used at different points within a unit/project, discuss current events, and/or debating topics. By using Socratic Questioning, teachers promote independent thinking and give students ownership of what they are learning. Higher-level thinking skills are present while students think, discuss, debate, evaluate, and analyze content through their thinking and the thinking of those around them. These types of questions may take some practice for both the teacher and student since it may be a whole new approach to group discussion.

- Plan significant questions that provide meaning and direction to the dialogue
- Use wait time: Allow at least thirty seconds for students to respond
- Follow up on students' responses
- Ask probing questions
- Periodically summarize in writing key points that have been discussed
- Work to engage as many students as possible into the discussion
- Let students discover knowledge on their own through probing questions

Link to [Socratic Seminar Question Sheet](#).

## Change Your Thinking

Helping students change their thoughts is an important part of adopting a growth mindset culture. Negative thought patterns are very challenging to break. Continue to support students by sharing strategies on how to identify negative thought patterns, negative thoughts, and/or irrational thoughts and how to challenge these thoughts. Below are some questions to help students challenge negative thinking patterns/thoughts. Additionally, find ways to help students reframe thoughts/statements from fixed mindset thinking to growth mindset thinking. Two resources are included (see links).

1. What are other ways of looking at this situation?
2. Am I looking at the whole picture?
3. What might be a more helpful way of picturing this situation?
4. What is the probability that my thoughts will happen? What are some other things that could happen that are equally or more probable?
5. Have I had any experiences in the past that suggests that this thought might not be completely true all of the time?
6. Can I really predict the future? Is it helpful to try? What can I do instead?

- Link to [Reframing Questions Handout-Challenging Negative Thinking Handout](#).
- Link to [What Can I Say To Myself Handout](#).

What can I say to myself?	
Instead of ....	Try thinking ....
I can't believe I made that mistake. I am so stupid.	I know that mistake I made is an opportunity for me to learn.



## Overview Of Growth Mindset

### Growth Mindset

Children/students with the growth belief system tend to:

- Care about and invest themselves in learning;
- Believe that effort is a positive thing, causing their intelligence to grow;
- Try hard in the face of frustration and failure;
- Seek to learn from mistakes/failures;
- Know and appreciate the process not just the product;
- Look for new learning strategies.

GROWTH MINDSET



### Fixed Mindset

Our students who think this way tend to:

- Care a lot about whether people think they are smart or not smart;
- Avoid learning challenges where they might make mistakes;
- Try to hide mistakes rather than trying to correct them;
- Believe that if they have the ability, they shouldn't have to try hard;
- Not deal well with frustration and setbacks, sometimes giving up or cheating.

### Process Praise: Focus on Your Language

The language we use with our students/children is very important in shaping a growth mindset. Work to use process praise instead of focusing on person-centered praise.

### Change Strategies to Increase Use of Process Praise/Encouragement

1. Praise the process, not the person.

Try this: Instead of "person praise" (e.g., "You are creative/smart/bright, athletic, etc."), offer "process praise":

- ⇒ Praise the strategy (e.g., "I noticed you are using the \_\_\_\_\_ strategy we practiced in class.")
- ⇒ Praise with specificity (e.g., "You seem to really understand fractions.")
- ⇒ Praise effort (e.g., "I can tell you've been practicing your spelling words.")

2. Keep it real: Don't say, "Good job!" when it's not.

3. Stop praising altogether. (Seriously? Yes, indeed.)

Simply, observe and make an "I" statement. For example, make a simple, evaluation-free statement such as "I noticed you put your shoes on by yourself today." or "I could see how much you studied and prepared for your quiz today." Such comments acknowledge effort and encourage students to take pride in their accomplishments.



## Language to Promote a Growth Mindset Handout



## Language to Promote A Growth Mindset

### GROWTH MINDSET



### FIXED MINDSET



#### AFTER A STUDENT SHOWS SUCCESS

"Great job, I can see you are using some strategies that we have been learning and practicing."

"Excellent work. It is apparent the level of effort you put in on this project."

"Love it! You stuck with it and kept practicing...all of those hours over the summer you spent practicing is apparent."

"Great job."

"Excellent."

"You are so talented."

#### WHEN A STUDENT NEEDS SUPPORT

"What did you do to prepare for the tryout? What could you do different next time?"

"I can see you are frustrated with the results of your quiz. I see you working hard in my class. I am wondering what strategies you might be able to apply from our class to your Math class?"

"I can see you are surprised by your grade. Tell me what you did to prepare for the test. Let's come up with a plan."

"Maybe you should try another sport."

"I wasn't very good at Math either -- that's why I am an English teacher."

"That's what happens when you don't study."

*Infographic created by Dr. Brandie Oliver, 2018*

[Link to Language to Promote a Growth Mindset Handout](#)



# BOOK LIST

## Grades K-4

- Anh's Anger* - by Gail Silver and Christiane Krömer [Feelings, Regulation]
- Beautiful Oops* - by Barney Saltzberg [Mindset, Learning from Mistakes]
- Dogger* - by Shirley Hughes
- Feelings* - by Aliko [Feelings, Insight]
- Glad Monster, Sad Monster: A Book About Feelings* - by Anne Miranda & Ed Emberley  
[Feelings, Insight, Regulation]
- Have You Filled A Bucket Today?* - by Carol McCloud [Empathy, Kindness Connection]
- I'm Mad (Dealing With Feelings)* - by Elizabeth Crary [Feelings, Insight, Regulation]
- I'm Frustrated (Dealing With Feelings)* - by Elizabeth Crary [Feelings, Insight, Regulation]
- In My Heart: A Book of Feelings* - by Jo Witek [Feelings, Insight, Connection]
- Ish* - by Peter H. Reynolds [Mindset, Connection, Effort]
- Listening Larry at School* - by Elizabeth Sautter and Kristen Wilson [Listening, Mindfulness]
- My Many Colored Days* - by Dr. Seuss
- Not A Box* - by Antoinette Portis [Mindset, Critical-Thinking/Creativity, Collaboration]
- On Monday When It Rained* - by Cherryl Kachenmeister
- One* - by Kathryn Otoshi [Empathy, Insight]
- Puppy Mind* - by Andrew Jordan Nance [Mindfulness]
- The Dot* - by Peter Reynolds [Mindset, Empathy]
- The Fantastic Elastic Brain* - by JoAnn Deak [Mindset, Neuroscience, Learn from Mistakes]
- The Girl Who Never Made A Mistake* - by Mark Pett & Gary Rubinstein
- The Lemonade Hurricane* - by Licia Morelli and Jennifer E. Morris [Mindfulness]
- The Invisible Boy* - by Trudy Ludwig [Insight, Empathy, Connection, Collaboration]
- The Listening Walk* - by Paul Showers and Aliko [Listening, Mindfulness]
- The Pinkish, Purplish, Bluish Egg* - by Bill Peet [Empathy, Stereotypes, Connection, Collaboration]
- The Three Questions* - by John Muth [Mindfulness, Friendship]
- Those Shoes* - by Maribeth Boelts [Empathy, Insight, Connection]



# BOOK LIST

## Grades K-4

***Tiny Stitches: The Life of Medical Pioneer Vivien Thomas*** - by Gwendolyn Hooks [Empathy, Insight, Connection, Cultural Responsiveness]

***Two*** - by Kathryn Otos [Empathy, Insight, Connection]

***Visiting Feelings*** - by Lauren Rubenstein [Feelings, Insight]

***What Do You Do With A Chance?*** - by Kobi Yomada [Mindset, Critical-Thinking]

***What Do You Do With An Idea?*** - by Kobi Yomada [Mindset, Critical-Thinking]

***What Do You Do With A Problem?*** - by Kobi Yomada [Mindset, Critical-Thinking]

***What Does It Mean To Be Present?*** - by Rana DiOrio [Mindfulness]

***What the Ladybug Heard*** - by Julia Donaldson [Listening, Mindfulness]

***When I Feel Angry*** - by Cornelia Maude Spelman [Feelings, Insight, Regulation]

***When Sophie Gets Angry- Really, Really Angry...*** - by Molly Garrett Bang [Feelings, Insight, Regulation]

***Zero*** - by Kathryn Otoshi [Empathy, Connection, Collaboration]

# BOOK LIST

## Grades 5-8

- Are You There God? It's Me Margaret*** - by Judy Blume [Insight, Empathy, Connection]
- Charlotte's Web*** - by E.B. White [Empathy, Connection, Collaboration]
- Clancy's Coat*** - by Eve Bunting [Insight, Connection, Problem-Solving]
- Crazy Lady!*** - by Jane Leslie Conly [Empathy, Courage, Connection]
- Souder*** - by William Armstrong [Collaboration, Empathy, Cultural Responsiveness]
- Great-Uncle Albert Forgets*** - by Ben Schechter [Compassion, Empathy, Connection]
- Phoenix Rising*** - by Karen Hesse [Critical-Thinking, Problem-Solving, Connection]
- The Gift*** - by Aliana Brodmann [Cultural Responsiveness, Connection]
- "The Gift of the Magi"*** - by O. Henry [Insight, Connection, Selflessness]
- The Happy Prince and Other Tales*** - by Oscar Wilde [Connection, Collaboration, Regulation, Critical-Thinking]
- The Hundred Dresses*** - by Eleanor Estes [Empathy, Insight, Connection]
- The Summer of Swans*** - by Betsy Byars [Empathy, Insight, Connection]
- Walk Two Moons*** - by Sharon Creech [Empathy, Insight, Connection]
- Wonder*** - by RJ Palacio [Empathy, Insight, Connection]

# BOOK LIST

## High School

*All the Colors We Are* – by Katie Kissinger & Wernher Krutien [Collaboration, Empathy, Cultural Responsiveness]

*A Tale of Two Cities* – by Charles Dickens Hope

*Black Dove, White Raven* – by Elizabeth Wein [Collaboration, Empathy, Cultural Responsiveness]

*Hidden Figures* – by Margot Lee Shetterly [Collaboration, Empathy, Cultural Responsiveness]

*Kindred: A Graphic Novel Adaptation* – by Octavia E. Butler [Connection, Empathy, Cultural Responsiveness]

*Hope Leslie* – by Catharine Maria Sedgwick [Collaboration, Empathy, Cultural Responsiveness]

*The Boy in the Striped Pajamas* – by John Boyne

*The Lorax– Dr. Seuss* – [Critical-Thinking w/environmental or other social issues]

*The Story of Martin Luther King, Jr.*, – Johnny Ray Moore [Collaboration, Empathy, Cultural Responsiveness]

*Wuthering Heights* – by Emily Bronte [Critical-Thinking, Empathy]

# BOOK LIST

## High School

*All the Colors We Are* – by Katie Kissinger & Wernher Krutien [Collaboration, Empathy, Cultural Responsiveness]

*A Tale of Two Cities* – by Charles Dickens Hope

*Black Dove, White Raven* – by Elizabeth Wein [Collaboration, Empathy, Cultural Responsiveness]

*Hidden Figures* – by Margot Lee Shetterly [Collaboration, Empathy, Cultural Responsiveness]

*Kindred: A Graphic Novel Adaptation* – by Octavia E. Butler [Connection, Empathy, Cultural Responsiveness]

*Hope Leslie* – by Catharine Maria Sedgwick [Collaboration, Empathy, Cultural Responsiveness]

*The Boy in the Striped Pajamas* – by John Boyne

*The Lorax– Dr. Seuss* – [Critical-Thinking w/environmental or other social issues]

*The Story of Martin Luther King, Jr.*, – Johnny Ray Moore [Collaboration, Empathy, Cultural Responsiveness]

*Wuthering Heights* – by Emily Bronte [Critical-Thinking, Empathy]

# BOOK LIST

## Immigrant & Refugee Students: Cultural Responsiveness

*Books specifically aimed to support immigrant and/or refugee students and/or help all students gain understanding and empathy for other cultures and expand their worldview*

### Grades K-5

*Four Feet, Two Sandals* by Karen Lynn Williams and Khadra Mohammed

*Muktar and the Camels* by Janet Graber

*My Name Is Sangoel* by Karen Williams

*Stepping Stones: A Refugee Family's Journey* by Margriet Ruurs

*Brothers in Hope: The Story of the Lost Boys of Sudan* by Mary Williams

*Silent Music: A Story of Baghdad* by James Rumford

*Teacup* by Rebecca Young

*The Red Pencil* by Andrea Davis Pinkney (grades 4 and up)

### Middle/High School

*Lost Girl Found* by Leah Bassoff and Laura DeLuca

*Stormy Seas: Stories of Young Boat Refugees* by Mary Beth Leatherdale, illustrated by Eleanor Shakespeare

*Of Beetles and Angels: A Boy's Remarkable Journey from a Refugee Camp to Harvard* by Mawi Asgedom

*Inside Out and Back Again* by Thanh Hà Lại

*all the broken pieces: a novel in verse* by Ann E. Burg

*Never Fall Down* by Patricia McCormick

*The Arrival* by Shaun Tan

*Outcasts United: The Story of a Refugee Soccer Team that Changed a Town* by Warren St. John

*Drita, My Homegirl* by Jenny Lombard

# LINKS TO ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

**Mind In The Making:** Mind in the Making (MITM), developed by Families and Work Institute (FWI), is an unprecedented effort to share the science of children's learning with the general public, families and professionals who work with them. Based on *Mind in the Making: The Seven Essential Life Skills Every Child Needs* (HarperCollins, 2010) by Ellen Galinsky, president of FWI, its mission is to promote Executive Function life skills in adults and through them in children in order to keep the fire for learning burning brightly in all of us.

**Thanks! A Strengths-Based Gratitude Curriculum for Tweens and Teens** Four lessons to help students understand the meaning of gratitude and how to cultivate it in their everyday lives.

**Grade Level:** The lessons were designed for both middle and high school students; however, teachers should feel free to adapt the lessons to meet the needs of their students.

**Learning To Breathe** is a research-based mindfulness curriculum created for classroom or group settings. Mindfulness is the practice of becoming aware of one's present-moment experience with compassion and openness as a basis for wise action. This curriculum is intended to strengthen attention and emotion regulation, cultivate wholesome emotions like gratitude and compassion, expand the repertoire of stress management skills, and help participants integrate mindfulness into daily life. Each lesson includes age-appropriate discussion, activities, and opportunities to practice mindfulness in a group setting. L2B has been researched in many setting and used with adolescents and adults. L2B has been recognized in the 2015 CASEL (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning) Guide as meeting research criteria for effective SEL programs.

**Association for Mindfulness in Education:** Mindfulness in Education:the Foundation for Teaching and Learning: The Association for Mindfulness in Education is a collaborative association of organizations and individuals working together to provide support for mindfulness training as a component of K-12 education.

**Random Acts Of Kindness:** The Random Acts of Kindness Foundation. We believe that kindness starts with one: One compliment, one smile, one kind act, one person. Our mission is to change schools, the workplace, families and society through kindness. We work toward that goal by creating free content that promotes kindness toward others & teaches important kindness skills to kids.



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